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**SELECT
WORKS
OF THE
BRITISH POETS.**

**WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL and CRITICAL PREFACES.**

**BY
DR. AIKIN.**

in Ten Volumes. VOL. VII.



L O N D O N.

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME & BROWN.

PATERNOSTER ROW.

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**Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
Printers-Street, London.**

AMBROSE PHILIPS.

AMBROSE PHILIPS, a poet and miscellaneous writer, was born in 1671, claiming his descent from an ancient Leicestershire family. He received his education at St John's College, Cambridge; and, attaching himself to the Whig party, he published, in 1700, an epitome of Hacket's life of Archbishop Williams, by which he obtained an introduction to Addison and Steele. Soon after, he made an attempt in pastoral poetry, which, for a time, brought him into celebrity. In 1709, being then at Copenhagen, he addressed to the Earl of Dorset some verses, descriptive of that capital, which are regarded as his best performance; and these, together with two translations from Sappho's writings, stand pre-eminent in his works of this class. In 1712 he made his appearance as a dramatic writer, in the tragedy of "The Distrest Mother," acted at Drury-lane with great applause, and still considered as a stock play. It cannot, indeed, claim the merit of originality, being closely copied from Racine's "Andromacque;" but it is well written, and skilfully adapted to the English stage.

A storm now fell upon him relatively to his pastorals, owing to an exaggerated compliment

from Tickell, who, in a paper of the *Guardian*, had made the true pastoral pipe descend in succession from Theocritus to Virgil, Spenser, and Philips. Pope, who found his own juvenile pastorals undervalued, sent to the same paper a comparison between his and those of Philips, in which he ironically gave the preference to the latter. The irony was not detected till it encountered the critical eye of Addison; and the consequence was, that it ruined the reputation of Philips as a composer of pastoral.

When the accession of George I. brought the Whigs again into power, Philips was made a Westminster justice, and, soon after, a commissioner for the lottery. In 1718, he was the editor of a periodical paper, called "*The Freethinker*." In 1724, he accompanied to Ireland his friend Dr. Boulter, created archbishop of Armagh, to whom he acted as secretary. He afterwards represented the county of Armagh in parliament; and the places of secretary to the Lord Chancellor, and Judge of the Prerogative Court, were also conferred upon him. He returned to England in 1748, and died in the following year, at the age of seventy-eight.

The verses which he composed, not only to young ladies in the nursery, but to Walpole when Minister of State, and which became known by the ludicrous appellation of *namby-pamby*, are easy and sprightly, but with a kind of infantile air, which fixed upon them the above name.

TO THE EARL OF DORSET.

Copenhagen, March 9. 1709.

FROM frozen climes, and endless tracts of snow,
 From streams which northern winds forbid to flow,
 What present shall the Muse to Dorset bring,
 Or how, so near the Pole, attempt to sing?
 The hoary winter here conceals from sight
 All pleasing objects which to verse invite.
 The hills and dales, and the delightful woods,
 The flowery plains, and silver-streaming floods,
 By snow disguis'd, in bright confusion lie,
 And with one dazzling waste fatigue the eye.

No gentle breathing breeze prepares the spring,
 No birds within the desert region sing.
 The ships, unmov'd, the boisterous winds defy,
 While rattling chariots o'er the ocean fly.
 The vast Leviathan wants room to play,
 And spout his waters in the face of day.
 The starving wolves along the main sea prowl,
 And to the Moon in icy valleys howl.
 O'er many a shining league the level main
 Here spreads itself into a glassy plain:
 There solid billows of enormous size,
 Alps of green ice, in wild disorder rise.

And yet but lately have I seen, ev'n here,
 The winter in a lovely dress appear.
 Ere yet the clouds let fall the treasur'd snow,
 Or winds begun through hazy skies to blow,

At evening a keen eastern breeze arose,
And the descending rain unsullied froze.
Soon as the silent shades of night withdrew,
The ruddy morn disclos'd at once to view
The face of Nature in a rich disguise,
And brighten'd every object to my eyes :
For every shrub, and every blade of grass,
And every pointed thorn, seem'd wrought in glass ;
In pearls and rubies rich the hawthorns show,
While through the ice the crimson berries glow.
The thick-sprung reeds, which watery marshes yield,
Seem'd polish'd lances in a hostile field.
The stag, in limpid currents, with surprise,
Sees crystal branches on his forehead rise.
The spreading oak, the beech, and towering pine,
Glaz'd over, in the freezing ether shine.
The frightened birds the rattling branches shun,
Which wave and glitter in the distant sun.
When, if a sudden gust of wind arise,
The brittle forest into atoms flies,
The crackling wood beneath the tempest bends,
And in a spangled shower the prospect ends :
Or, if a southern gale the region warm,
And by degrees unbind the wintery charm,
The traveller a miry country sees,
And journeys sad beneath the dropping trees :
Like some deluded peasant, Merlin leads [meads :
Through fragrant bowers, and through delicious
While here enchanted gardens to him rise,
And airy fabrics there attract his eyes,
His wandering feet the magic paths pursue,
And, while he thinks the fair illusion true,

The trackless scenes disperse in fluid air,
And woods, and wilds, and thorny ways appear.
A tedious road the weary wretch returns,
And, as he goes, the transient vision mourns.

A HYMN TO VENUS,

FROM THE GREEK OF SAPPHO.

O VENUS, beauty of the skies,
To whom a thousand temples rise,
Gaily false in gentle smiles,
Full of love-perplexing wiles,
O, goddess ! from my heart remove
The wasting cares and pains of love.

If ever thou hast kindly heard
A song in soft distress preferr'd,
Propitious to my tuneful vow,
O, gentle goddess, hear me now
Descend, thou bright immortal guest,
In all thy radiant charms confest.

Thou once didst leave almighty Jove,
And all the golden roofs above :
The car thy wanton sparrows drew ;
Hovering in air they lightly flew ;
As to my bower they wing'd their way,
I saw their quivering pinions play.

The birds, dismiss'd, (while you remain,)
Bore back their empty car again :
Then you, with looks divinely mild,
In every heavenly feature smil'd,
And ask'd, what new complaints I made,
And why I call'd you to my aid ?

What phrenzy in my bosom rag'd,
And by what care to be assuag'd ?
What gentle youth I would allure,
Whom in my artful toils secure ?
Who does thy tender heart subdue,
Tell me, my Sappho, tell me who ?

Though now he shuns thy longing arms,
He soon shall court thy slighted charms ;
Though now thy offerings he despise,
He soon to thee shall sacrifice ;
Though now he freeze, he soon shall burn,
And be thy victim in his turn.

Celestial visitant, once more
Thy needful presence I implore !
In pity come and ease my grief,
Bring my distemper'd soul relief :
Favour thy suppliant's hidden fires,
And give me all my heart desires.

A FRAGMENT OF SAPPHO.

BLISS as the immortal gods is he,
The youth who fondly sits by thee,
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

'Twas this deprived my soul of rest,
And rais'd such tumults in my breast ;
For while I gas'd, in transport tost,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

My bosom glow'd ; the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame ;
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung,
My ears with hollow murmurs rung.

In dewy damps my limbs were chill'd,
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd ;
My feeble pulse forgot to play,
I fainted, sunk, and died away.

WILLIAM COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS, a distinguished modern poet, was born at Chichester, in 1720 or 1721, where his father exercised the trade of a hatter. He received his education at Winchester College, whence he entered as a commoner of Queen's college, Oxford. In 1741, he procured his election into Magdalen college as a *demý*; and it was here that he wrote his poetical "Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer," and his "Oriental Eclogues;" of both which pieces the success was but moderate. In 1744, he came to London as a literary adventurer, and various were the projects which he formed in this capacity. In 1746, however, he ventured to lay before the public a volume of "Odes, Descriptive and Allegorical;" but so callous was the national taste at this time, that their sale did not pay for the printing. Collins, whose spirit was high, returned to the bookseller his copy-money, burnt all the unsold copies, and as soon as it lay in his power, indemnified him for his small loss; yet among these odes, were many pieces which now rank among the finest lyric compositions in the language. After this mortification, he obtained from the booksellers

a small sum for an intended translation of Aristotle's Poetics, and paid a visit to an uncle, Lieutenant-colonel Martin, then with the army in Germany. The Colonel dying soon after, left Collins a legacy of 2000*l.*, a sum which raised him to temporary opulence; but he now soon became incapable of every mental exertion. Dreadful depression of spirits was an occasional attendant on his malady, for which he had no remedy but the bottle. It was about this time, that it was thought proper to confine him in a receptacle of lunatics. Dr. Johnson paid him a visit at Islington, when there was nothing of disorder in his mind, perceptible to any but himself. He was reading the New Testament. "I have but one book," said he, "but it is the best." He was finally consigned to the care of his sister, in whose arms he finished his short and melancholy course, in the year 1756.

It is from his Odes, that Collins derives his chief poetical fame; and in compensation for the neglect with which they were treated at their first appearance, they are now almost universally regarded as the first productions of the kind in our language with respect to vigour of conception, boldness and variety of personification, and genuine warmth of feeling. They are well characterised in an essay prefixed to his works in an ornamented edition published by Cadell and Davies, with which we shall conclude this article. "He will be acknowledged (says the author) to possess imagination, sweetness, bold and figurative language. His numbers dwell on the ear, and easily fix themselves in the memory.

His vein of sentiment is by turns tender and lofty, always tinged with a degree of melancholy, but not possessing any claim to originality. *His* originality consists in his manner, in the highly figurative garb in which he clothes abstract ideas, in the felicity of his expressions, and his skill in embodying ideal creations. He had much of the mysticism of poetry, and sometimes became obscure by aiming at impressions stronger than he had clear and well-defined ideas to support. Had his life been prolonged, and with life had he enjoyed that ease which is necessary for the undisturbed exercise of the faculties, he would probably have risen far above most of his contemporaries."

ODE TO PITY.

O πηου, the friend of man assign'd,
 With balmy hands his wounds to bind,
 And charm his frantic woe :
 When first Distress, with dagger keen,
 Broke forth to waste his destin'd scene,
 His wild unsated foe !

By Pella's bard, a magic name,
 By all the griefs his thought could frame,
 Receive my humble rite :
 Long, Pity, let the nations view
 Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
 And eyes of dewy light !

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilianus' distant side,
Deserted stream, and mute ?
Wild Arun * too has heard thy strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native plains,
Been sooth'd by Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head,
To him thy cell was shown ;
And while he sung the female heart,
With youth's soft notes unspoil'd by art,
Thy turtles mix'd their own.

Come, Pity, come, by Fancy's aid,
E'en now my thoughts, relenting maid,
Thy temple's pride design :
Its southern site, its truth complete,
Shall raise a wild enthusiast heat
In all who view the shrine.

There Picture's toil shall well relate,
How Chance, or hard involving Fate,
O'er mortal bliss prevail :
The buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
And, sighing, prompt her tender hand
With each disastrous tale.

* A river in Sussex.

There let me oft, retir'd by day,
In dreams of passion melt away,
Allow'd with thee to dwell :
There waste the mournful lamp of night,
Till, Virgin, thou again delight
To hear a British shell !

ODE TO FEAR.

THOU, to whom the world unknown
With all its shadowy shapes is shown ;
Who seest appall'd th' unreal scene,
While Fancy lifts the veil between :
Ah, Fear ! ah, frantic Fear !
I see, I see thee near.
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye !
Like thee I start, like thee disorder'd fly.
For, lo, what monsters in thy train appear !
Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
What mortal eye can fixt behold ?
Who stalks his round, a hideous form,
Howling amidst the midnight storm,
Or throws him on the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep :
And with him thousand phantoms join'd,
Who prompt to deeds accurs'd the mind :
And those, the fiends, who, near allied,
O'er Nature's wounds and wrecks preside ;
While Vengeance, in the lurid air,
Lifts her red arm, expos'd and bare :

On whom that ravening brood of Fate,
 Who lap the blood of Sorrow, wait ;
 Who, Fear, this ghastly train can see,
 And look not madly wild, like thee ?

EPODE.

In earliest Greece, to thee, with partial choice,
 The grief-full Muse address'd her infant tongue ;
 The maids and matrons, on her awful voice,
 Silent and pale, in wild amazement hung.

Yet he, the bard * who first invok'd thy name,
 Disdain'd in Marathon its power to feel :
 For not alone he nurs'd the poet's flame,
 But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot's steel.

But who is he, whom later garlands grace,
 Who left awhile o'er Hybla's dews to rove,
 With trembling eyes thy dreary steps to trace,
 Where thou and furies shar'd the baleful grove ?

Wrapt in thy cloudy veil th' incestuous queen †,
 Sigh'd the sad call her son and husband heard,
 When once alone it broke the silent scene,
 And he the wretch of Thebes no more appear'd.

O Fear ! I know thee by my throbbing heart,
 Thy withering power inspir'd each mournful line ;
 Though gentle Pity claim her mingled part,
 Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine.

* Æschylus.

† Jocasta.

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C

ANTISTROPHE.

Thou who such weary lengths hast past,
 Where wilt thou rest, mad nymph, at last ?
 Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted cell,
 Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell ?
 Or in some hollow'd seat,
 'Gainst which the big waves beat,
 Hear drowning seamen's cries in tempests brought !
 Dark power, with shuddering meek submitted
 thought,

Be mine, to read the visions old,
 Which thy awakening bards have told.
 And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
 Hold each strange tale devoutly true ;
 Ne'er be I found, by thee o'er-aw'd,
 In that thrice-hallow'd eve abroad,
 When ghosts, as cottage-maids believe,
 Their pebbled beds permitted leave,
 And goblins haunt from fire, or fen,
 Or mine, or flood, the walks of men !

O thou, whose spirit most possessest
 The sacred seat of Shakspeare's breast !
 By all that from thy prophet broke,
 In thy divine emotions spoke !
 Hither again thy fury deal,
 Teach me but once like him to feel :
 His cypress wreath my meed decree,
 And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee !

ODE.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1746.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
 By all their country's wishes blest !
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
 Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
 She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
 Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By Fairy hands their knell is rung,
 By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
 Their Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
 To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
 And Freedom shall awhile repair,
 To dwell a weeping hermit there !

ODE, TO A LADY,

ON THE DEATH OF COL. CHARLES ROSS, IN THE
 ACTION AT FONTENOY.

Written May, 1745.

WHILE, lost to all his former mirth,
 Britannia's genius bends to earth,
 And mourns the fatal day :
 While stain'd with blood he strives to tear
 Unseemly from his sea-green hair
 The wreaths of cheerful May :

The thoughts which musing Pity pays,
And fond Remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful hours attend :
Still Fancy, to herself unkind,
Awakes to grief the soften'd mind,
And points the bleeding friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending wave
His country's vows shall bless the grave,
Where'er the youth is laid :
That sacred spot the village hind
With every sweetest turf shall bind,
And Peace protect the shade.

O'er him, whose doom thy virtues grieve,
Ærial forms shall sit at eve,
And bend the pensive head ;
And, fall'n to save his injur'd land,
Imperial Honour's awful hand
Shall point his lonely bed !

The warlike dead of every age,
Who fill the fair recording page,
Shall leave their sainted rest :
And, half-reclining on his spear,
Each wondering chief by turns appear
To hail the blooming guest.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
Shall crowd from Cressy's laurel'd field,
And gaze with fix'd delight :

Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish th' avenging fight.

But, lo ! where, sunk in deep despair,
Her garments torn, her bosom bare,
Impatient Freedom lies !
Her matted tresses madly spread,
To every sod which wraps the dead,
She turns her joyless eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly ground,
Till notes of triumph bursting round
Proclaim her reign restor'd :
Till William seek the sad retreat,
And, bleeding at her sacred feet,
Present the sated sword.

If, weak to soothe so soft an heart,
These pictur'd glories nought impart,
To dry'thy constant tear :
If yet, in Sorrow's distant eye,
Expos'd and pale thou see'st him lie,
Wild war insulting near :

Where'er from time thou court'st relief,
The Muse shall still, with social grief,
Her gentlest promise keep :
E'en humble Harting's cottag'd vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
And bid her shepherds weep.

ODE TO EVENING.

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales ;

O nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd Sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed :

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd bat,
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
Now teach me, maid compos'd,
To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov'd return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with
sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light :

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes :

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name !

ODE TO LIBERTY.

STROPHE.

Who shall awake the Spartan fire,
And call in solemn sounds to life,
The youths, whose locks divinely spreading,
Like vernal hyacinths in sullen hue,
At once the breath of fear and virtue shedding,
Applauding Freedom lov'd of old to view ?
What new Alceus, fancy-blest,
Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest,
At Wisdom's shrine awhile its flame concealing,
(What place so fit to seal a deed renown'd ?)
Till she her brightest lightnings round revealing,
It leap'd in glory forth, and dealt her prompted
wound !

O goddess, in that feeling hour,
When most its sounds would court thy ears,
Let not my shell's misguided power
E'er draw thy sad, thy mindful tears.
No, Freedom, no, I will not tell,
How Rome, before thy face,
With heaviest sound, a giant-statue, fell,
Push'd by a wild and artless race,
From off its wide ambitious base,
When Time his northern sons of spoil awoke,
And all the blended work of strength and grace
With many a rude repeated stroke,
And many a barbarous yell, to thousand fragments
broke,

EPODE.

Yet, e'en where'er the least appear'd
Th' admiring world thy hand rever'd ;
Still, 'midst the scatter'd states around,
Some remnants of her strength were found ;
They saw, by what escap'd the storm,
How wondrous rose her perfect form ;
How in the great, the labour'd whole,
Each mighty master pour'd his soul ;
For sunny Florence, seat of Art,
Beneath her vines preserv'd a part,
Till they, whom Science lov'd to name,
(O, who could fear it !) quench'd her flame.
And, lo, an humbler relic laid
In jealous Pisa's olive shade !
See small Marino joins the theme,
Though least, not last in thy esteem ;
Strike, louder strike th' ennobling strings
To those, whose merchants sons were kings ;
To him, who, deck'd with pearly pride,
In Adria weds his green-hair'd bride :
Hail, port of glory, wealth, and pleasure,
Ne'er let me change this Lydian measure :
Nor e'er her former pride relate
To sad Liguria's bleeding state.
Ah, no ! more pleas'd thy haunts I seek,
On wild Helvetia's mountains bleak :
(Where, when the favour'd of thy choice,
The daring archer heard thy voice ;
Forth from his eyrie rous'd in dread,
The ravening eagle northward fled.)

Or dwell in willow'd meads more near,
 With those to whom the stork * is dear:
 Those whom the rod of Alva bruis'd,
 Whose crown a British queen refus'd!
 The magic works, thou feel'st the strains,
 One holier name alone remains;
 The perfect spell shall then avail,
 Hail, nymph, ador'd by Britain, hail!

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the measure vast of thought,
 The works, the wizard Time has wrought!
 The Gaul, 't is held of antique story,
 Saw Britain link'd to his now adverse strand †,
 No sea between, nor cliff sublime and hoary,
 He pass'd with unwet feet through all our land.
 To the blown Baltic then, they say,
 The wild waves found another way,

* The Dutch, amongst whom there are very severe penalties for those who are convicted of killing this bird. They are kept tame in almost all their towns, and particularly at the Hague, of the arms of which they make a part. The common people of Holland are said to entertain a superstitious sentiment, that if the whole species of them should become extinct, they should lose their liberties.

† This tradition is mentioned by several of our old historians. Some naturalists, too, have endeavoured to support the probability of the fact, by arguments drawn from the correspondent disposition of the two opposite coasts. I do not remember that any poetical use has been hitherto made of it.

Where Orcas howls, his wolfish mountains rounding;
Till all the banded west at once 'gan rise,
A wide wild storm e'en Nature's self confounding,
Withering her giant sons with strange uncouth
surprise.
This pillar'd earth so firm and wide,
By winds and inward labours torn,
In thunders dread was push'd aside,
And down the shouldering billows borne.
And see, like gems, her laughing train,
The little isles on every side,
Mona *, once hid from those who search the main,
Where thousand elfin shapes abide,
And Wight, who checks the westering tide,
For thee consenting Heaven has each bestow'd,
A fair attendant on her sovereign pride :
To thee this blest divorce she ow'd,
For thou hast made her vales thy lov'd, thy last
abode!

* There is a tradition in the Isle of Man, that a mermaid, becoming enamoured of a young man of extraordinary beauty, took an opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the shore, and opened her passion to him, but was received with a coldness, occasioned by his horror and surprise at her appearance. This, however, was so misconstrued by the sea-lady, that, in revenge for his treatment of her, she punished the whole island, by covering it with a mist, so that all who attempted to carry on any commerce with it, either never arrived at it, but wandered up and down the sea, or were on a sudden wrecked upon its cliffs.

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 't is said, an hoary pile,
'Midst the green navel of our isle,
Thy shrine in some religious wood,
O soul-enforcing goddess, stood !
There oft the painted native's feet
Were wont thy form celestial meet :
Though now with hopeless toil we trace
Time's backward rolls, to find its place ;
Whether the fiery-tressed Dane,
Or Roman's self o'erturn'd the fane,
Or in what heaven-left age it fell,
'T were hard for modern song to tell.
Yet still, if truth those beams infuse,
Which guide at once, and charm the Muse,
Beyond yon braided clouds that lie,
Paving the light embroider'd sky :
Amidst the bright pavilion'd plains,
The beauteous model still remains,
There happier than in islands blest,
Or bowers by Spring or Hebe drest,
The chiefs who fill our Albion's story,
In warlike weeds, retir'd in glory,
Hear their consorted Druids sing
Their triumphs to th' immortal string.

How may the poet now unfold,
What never tongue or numbers told ?
How learn delighted, and amaz'd,
What hands unknown that fabric rais'd ?
E'en now, before his favour'd eyes,
In Gothic pride it seems to rise !

Yet Grecia's graceful orders join,
Majestic, through the mix'd design ;
The secret builder knew to chuse,
Each sphere-found gem of richest hues :
Whate'er Heaven's purer mould contains,
When nearer suns emblaze its veins ;
There on the walls the patriot's sight
May ever hang with fresh delight,
And, 'grav'd with some prophetic rage,
Read Albion's fame through every age.

Ye forms divine, ye laureate band,
That near her inmost altar stand !
Now soothe her, to her blissful train
Blithe Concord's social form to gain :
Concord, whose myrtle wand can steep
E'en Anger's blood-shot eyes in sleep :
Before whose breathing bosom's balm,
Rage drops his steel, and storms grow calm ;
Her let our sires and matrons hoar
Welcome to Britain's ravag'd shore,
Our youths, enamour'd of the fair,
Play with the tangles of her hair,
Till, in one loud applauding sound,
The nations shout to her around,
" O, how supremely art thou blest,
Thou, lady, thou shalt rule the Wes

THE PASSIONS.

AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possess beyond the Muse's painting ;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd ;
Till once, 't is said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound,
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for madness rul'd the hour,
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings,
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woeful measures wan Despair —
Low sullen sounds his grief beguil'd,
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'T was sad by fits, by starts 't was wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure ?
Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail !
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still through all the song ;
And where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden
hair.
And longer had she sung — but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down,
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sound so full of woe.
And ever and anon he beat,
The doubling drum with furious heat ; [tween,
And though sometimes, each dreary pause be-
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting
from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad proof of thy distressful state,
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on
Hate

With eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale Melancholy sat retir'd,
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul :
 And dashing soft from rocks around
 Bubbling runnels join'd the sound ; [stole,
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure
 Or o'er some haunted streams with fond delay,
 Round an holy calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and lonely musing,
 In hollow murmurs died away.
But, O, how alter'd was its sprightlier tone !
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
 Her bow across her shoulder flung,
 Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung.
 The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known ;
 The oak-crown'd sisters, and their chaste-ey'd
 queen,
 Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen,
 Peeping from forth their alleys green ;
Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
 And Sport leapt up, and seiz'd his beechen spear.
Last came Joy's ecstatic trial,
He, with viny crown advancing,
 First to the lively pipe his hand address,
But soon he saw the brisk-awakening viol,
 Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best.
 They would have thought, who heard the strain,
 They saw in Tempé's vale her native maids,
 Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,

While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love fram'd with Mirth a gay fantastic round,
Loose were her tresses seen, her sone unbound,
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music, sphere-descended maid,
Friend of pleasure, wisdom's aid,
Why, goddess, why to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that lov'd Athenian bower,
You learn'd an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to virtue, fancy, art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
Fill thy recording sister's page —
'T is said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
E'en all at once together found
Cæcilia's mingled world of sound —
O, bid our vain endeavours cease,
Revive the just designs of Greece,
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

SUNG BY GUIDERUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE,
SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet, of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing Spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove,
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew.

The red-breast oft at evening hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake thy sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Belov'd, till life can charm no more;
And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.

AN ODE
ON THE
POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND;
CONSIDERED AS
THE SUBJECT OF POETRY.

INSCRIBED TO MR. JOHN HOME.

HOME, thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads
long

Have seen thee lingering with a fond delay, [day
Mid those soft friends, whose hearts some future
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song. *

Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth † [side ;

Whom, long endear'd, thou leav'st by Lavant's
Together let us wish him lasting truth

And joy untainted with his destin'd bride.

Go ! nor regardless, while these numbers boast

My short-liv'd bliss, forget my social name ;

But think, far off, how, on the Southern coast,

I met thy friendship with an equal flame !

Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, where every vale

Shall prompt the poet, and his song demand :

To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail ;

Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,

And paint what all believe, who own thy genial land.

* How truly did Collins predict Home's tragic powers !

† A gentleman of the name of Barrow, who introduced Home to Collins.

There must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill;
 'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet;
 Where still, 't is said, the fairy people meet,
 Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
 There each trim lass, that skims the milky store
 To the swart tribes, their creamy bowls alots;
 By night they sip it round the cottage-door,
 While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
 There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
 How, wing'd with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
 When the sick ewe her summer food forgoes,
 Or, stretch'd on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
 Such airy beings awe th' untutor'd swain:
 Nor thou, tho' learn'd, his homelier thoughts
 neglect;
 Let thy sweet Muse the rural faith sustain;
 These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
 That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
 And fill with double force her heart-commanding
 strain.

E'en yet preserv'd, how often mayst thou hear,
 Where to the Pole the Boreal mountains run,
 Taught by the father, to his listening son;
 Strange lays, whose power had charm'd a Spenser's
 ear.
 At every pause, before thy mind possesst,
 Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
 With uncouth lyres, in many-colour'd vest,
 Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crown'd:
 Whether thou bidd'st the well-taught hind repeat
 The choral dirge that mourns some chieftain brave,

When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
 And strew'd with choicest herbs his scented grave ;
 Or, whether sitting in the shepherd's shiel,
 Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms ;
 When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
 The sturdy clans pour'd forth their brawny
 swarms,
 And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's arms.

'T is thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,
 In Sky's lone isle, the gifted wizard-seer,
 Lodg'd in the wintry cave with Fate's fell spear,
 Or in the depth of Uist's dark forest dwells :
 How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
 With their own vision oft astonish'd droop ;
 When, o'er the watery strath, or quaggy moss,
 They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
 Or, if in sports, or on the festive green,
 Their destin'd glance some fated youth descry,
 Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
 And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
 For them the viewless forms of air obey ;
 Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair.
 They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
 And heartless, oft like moody madness, stare
 To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

To monarchs dear, some hundred miles astray,
 Oft have I seen Fate give the fatal blow !
 The seer, in Sky, shriek'd as the blood did flow,
 When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay !

As Boreas threw his young Aurora * forth,
 In the first year of the first George's reign,
 And battles rag'd in welkin of the North,
 They mourn'd in air, fell, fell Rebellion slain !
 And as, of late, they joy'd in Preston's fight,
 Saw at sad Falkirk all their hopes near crown'd !
 They rav'd ! divining thro' their second sight †,
 Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were
 drown'd !
 Illustrious William ! ‡ Britain's guardian name !
 One William sav'd us from a tyrant's stroke ;
 He, for a sceptre, gain'd heroic fame,
 But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast
 broke,
 To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's
 yoke !

These, too, thou 'lt sing ! for well thy magic Muse
 Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar ;
 Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more !
 Ah, homely swains ! your homeward steps ne'er
 lose ;

* By young Aurora, Collins undoubtedly meant the first appearance of the northern lights, which happened about the year 1715 ; at least, it is most highly probable, from this peculiar circumstance, that no ancient writer whatever has taken any notice of them, nor even any one modern, previous to the above period.

† Second sight is the term that is used for the divination of the Highlanders.

‡ The late Duke of Cumberland, who defeated the Pretender at the battle of Culloden.

Let not dank Will * mislead you to the heath :
 Dancing in mirky night, o'er fen and lake,
 He glows, to draw you downward to your death,
 In his bewitch'd, low, marshy, willow brake !
 What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
 His glimmering mazes cheer th' excursive sight,
 Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
 Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light ;
 For watchful, lurking, 'mid th' unrustling reed,
 At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
 And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
 And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
 If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch
 surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest, indeed !
 Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
 Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then !
 To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed :
 On him, enrag'd, the fiend, in angry mood,
 Shall never look with pity's kind concern,
 But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
 O'er its drown'd banks, forbidding all return !
 Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape,
 To some dim hill that seems uprising near,
 To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,
 In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
 Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,
 Pour'd sudden forth from every swelling source !

* A fiery meteor, called by various names, such as Will with the Wisp, Jack with the Lantern, &c. It hovers in the air over marshy and fenny places.

What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs ?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful
force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless
corse !

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way ;
For him in vain, at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate :
Ah, ne'er shall he return ! Alone, if night
Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With drooping willows drest his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep :
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak :
“ Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils, pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before ;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the osier'd shore,
Drown'd by the Kelpie's * wrath, nor e'er shall aid
thee more !”

Unbounded is thy range ; with varied skill
Thy Muse may, like those feathery tribes which
spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,

* The water-fiend.

To that hoar pile * which still its ruin shows :

In whose small vaults a Pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wond'ring, from the hallow'd
ground !

Or thither †, where beneath the show'ry west

The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid :
Once foes, perhaps together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade :
Yet frequent now, at midnight solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs ærial council hold.

But, oh, o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,

On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting
tides,

Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides,
Go ! just, as they, their blameless manners trace !
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song,
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintery main.

* One of the Hebrides is called the Isle of Pig-
mies ; where it is reported that several miniature
bones of the human species have been dug up in
the ruins of a chapel there.

† Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides, where nearly
sixty of the ancient Scottish, Irish, and Norwegian
kings are interred.

With sparing temperance at the needful time
 They drain the scented spring ; or, hunger-press'd,
 Along th' Atlantic rock, undreading, climb,
 And of its eggs despoil the solan's * nest.
 Thus blest in primal innocence they live,
 Suffic'd and happy with that frugal fare
 Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
 Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare ;
 Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there !

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes en-
gage

Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possess ;
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But fill'd in elder time th' historic page.
There, Shakspeare's self, with ev'ry garland crown'd,
Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,
In musing hour ; his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors dress'd the magic scene.
From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted, and aghast !
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
'Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant pass'd.
Proceed ! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answering bosom pierce ;
Proceed, in forceful sounds, and colour bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse ;
To such adapt thy lyre, and suit thy powerful verse.

* An aquatic bird like a goose, on the eggs of which the inhabitants of St. Kilda, another of the Hebrides, chiefly subsist.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
 From sober truth, are still to Nature true,
 And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
 Th' heroic Muse employ'd her Tasso's art.
 How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's stroke
 Its gushing blood the gaping cypress pour'd!
 When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
 And the wild blast upheav'd the vanish'd sword!
 How have I sat, when pip'd the pensive wind,
 To hear his harp by British Fairfax strung!
 Prevailing poet! whose undoubting mind
 Believ'd the magic wonders which he sung!
 Hence, at each sound, imagination glows!
 Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here!
 Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows!
 Melting it flows, pure, murmuring, strong, and
 clear,
 And fills th' empassion'd heart, and wins th' har-
 monious ear!

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail!
 Ye splendid friths and lakes, which, far away,
 Are by smooth Anan fill'd, or past'ral Tay,
 Or Don's * romantic springs, at distance, hail!
 The time shall come, when I, perhaps, may tread
 Your lowly glens † o'erhung with spreading
 broom;
 Or o'er your stretching heaths, by Fancy led;
 Or o'er your mountains creep, in awful gloom!

* Three rivers in Scotland. † Valleys.

Then will I dress once more the faded bower,
 Where Jonson sat in Drummond's classic shade * ;
 Or crop, from Tiviotdale, each lyric flower,
 And mourn, on Yarrow's banks, where Willy's
 laid !
 Meantime, ye powers, that on the plains which bore
 The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains † attend !
 Where'er Home dwells, on hill or lowly moor,
 To him I lose, your kind protection lend,
 And, touch'd with love like mine, preserve my ab-
 sent friend !

ODE

ON

THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

THE SCENE OF THE FOLLOWING STANZAS IS SUPPOSED
 TO LIE ON THE THAMES, NEAR RICHMOND.

In yonder grave a Druid lies
 Where slowly winds the stealing wave :
 The year's best sweets shall duteous rise,
 To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

* Ben Jonson paid a visit on foot, in 1619, to the Scotch poet, Drummond, at his seat of Hawthornden, within four miles of Edinburgh.

† Barrow, it seems, was at the Edinburgh University, which is in the county of Mid-Lothian.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
 • His airy harp • shall now be laid,
 That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
 May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
 And, while its sounds at distance swell,
 Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
 To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
 When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
 And oft suspend the dashing oar
 To bid his gentle spirit rest !

And oft as Ease and Health retire
 To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
 The friend shall view yon whitening spire †,
 And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

But thou, who own'st that earthly bed,
 Ah ! what will every dirge avail ?
 Or tears which Love and Pity shed,
 That mourn beneath the gliding sail !

Yet lives there one, whose heedless eye
 Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near ?
 With him, sweet bard, may Fancy die,
 And Joy desert the blooming year.

• The harp of Æolus, of which see a description
 in the Castle of Indolence.

† Mr. Thomson was buried in Richmond church.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crown'd sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend !

And see, the fairy valleys fade,
Dun Night has veil'd the solemn view !
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's child, again adieu !

The genial meads * assign'd to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom !
Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress
With simple hands thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone, and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes,
" O! vales, and wild woods," shall he say,
" In yonder grave your Druid lies !"

* Mr. Thomson resided in the neighbourhood of
Richmond some time before his death.

JOHN DYER.

JOHN DYER, an agreeable poet, was the son of a solicitor at Aberglasney, in Carmarthenshire, where he was born in 1700. He was brought up at Westminster-school, and was designed by his father for his own profession; but being at liberty, in consequence of his father's death, to follow his own inclination, he indulged what he took for natural taste in painting, and entered as pupil to Mr. Richardson. After wandering for some time about South Wales and the adjacent counties as an itinerant artist, he appeared convinced that he should not attain to eminence in that profession. In 1727, he first made himself known as a poet, by the publication of his "Grongar Hill," descriptive of a scene afforded by his native country, which became one of the most popular pieces of its class, and has been admitted into numerous collections. Dyer then travelled to Italy, still in pursuit of professional improvement; and if he did not acquire this in any considerable degree, he improved his poetical taste, and laid in a store of new images. These he displayed in a poem of some length, published in 1740, which he entitled "The Ruins of Rome,"

that capital having been the principal object of his journeyings. Of this work it may be said, that it contains many passages of real poetry, and that the strain of moral and political reflection denotes a benevolent and enlightened mind.

His health being now in a delicate state, he was advised by his friends to take orders; and he was accordingly ordained by Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Lincoln; and, entering into the married state, he sat down on a small living in Leicestershire. This he exchanged for one in Lincolnshire; but the fenny country in which he was placed did not agree with his health, and he complained of the want of books and company. In 1757, he published his largest work, "The Fleece," a didactic poem, in four books, of which the first part is pastoral, the second mechanical, the third and fourth historical and geographical. This poem has never been very popular, many of its topics not being well adapted to poetry; yet the opinions of critics have varied concerning it. It is certain that there are many pleasing, and some grand and impressive passages in the work; but, upon the whole, the general feeling is, that the length of the performance necessarily imposed upon it a degree of tediousness.

Dyer did not long survive the completion of his book. He died of a gradual decline in 1758, leaving behind him, besides the reputation of an ingenious poet, the character of an honest, humane, and worthy person.

GRONGAR HILL.

SILENT nymph, with curious eye !
 Who, the purple evening, lie
 On the mountain's lonely van,
 Beyond the noise of busy man ;
 Painting fair the form of things,
 While the yellow linnet sings ;
 Or the tuneful nightingale
 Charms the forest with her tale ; —
 Come, with all thy various dues,
 Come and aid thy sister Muse ;
 Now, while Phœbus riding high,
 Gives lustre to the land and sky !
 Grongar Hill invites my song,
 Draw the landscape bright and strong ;
 Grongar, in whose mossy cells
 Sweetly musing Quiet dwells ;
 Grongar, in whose silent shade,
 For the modest Muses made,
 So oft I have, the evening still,
 At the fountain of a rill,
 Sate upon a flowery bed,
 With my hand beneath my head ;
 While stray'd my eyes o'er Towy's flood,
 Over mead and over wood,
 From house to house, from hill to hill,
 Till Contemplation had her fill.

About his chequer'd sides I wind,
 And leave his brooks and meads behind,
 And groves, and grottoes where I lay,
 And vistas shooting beams of day :

Wide and wider spreads the vale,
As circles on a smooth canal :
The mountains round, unhappy fate !
Sooner or later, of all height,
Withdraw their summits from the skies,
And lessen as the others rise :
Still the prospect wider spreads,
Adds a thousand woods and meads ;
Still it widens, widens still,
And sinks the newly-risen hill.

Now, I gain the mountain's brow,
What a landscape lies below !
No clouds, no vapours intervene ;
But the gay, the open scene
Does the face of Nature show,
In all the hues of Heaven's bow !
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight.

Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly towering in the skies !
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires !
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain-heads !
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks !

Below me trees unnumber'd rise,
Beautiful in various dyes :
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beech, the sable yew,
The slender fir that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs.

And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phyllis, queen of love !
Gaudy as the opening dawn,
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wandering eye !
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are cloth'd with waving wood,
And ancient towers crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below ;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps ;
So both a safety from the wind
On mutual dependence find.
'T is now th' raven's bleak abode ;
'T is now the apartment of the toad ;
And there the fox securely feeds ;
And there the poisonous adder breeds,
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds ;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
Yet Time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state ;
But transient is the smile of Fate !
A little rule, a little sway,
A sun-beam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.
And see the rivers how they run,
Through woods and meads, in shade and sun,

Sometimes swift, sometimes slow,
 Wave succeeding wave, they go
 A various journey to the deep,
 Like human life, to endless sleep !
 Thus is Nature's vesture wrought,
 To instruct our wandering thought ;
 Thus she dresses green and gay,
 To disperse our cares away.

Ever charming, ever new,
 When will the landscape tire the view !
 The fountain's fall, the river's flow,
 The woody valleys, warm and low ;
 The windy summit, wild and high,
 Roughly rushing on the sky !
 The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tower,
 The naked rock, the shady bower ;
 The town and village, dome and farm,
 Each give each a double charm,
 As pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.

See on the mountain's southern side,
 Where the prospect opens wide,
 Where the evening gilds the tide ;
 How close and small the hedges lie !
 That streaks of meadows cross the eye !
 Next step methinks may pass the stream,
 So little distant dangers seem ;
 So we mistake the Future's face,
 Ey'd through Hope's deluding glass ;
 As yon summits soft and fair,
 Clad in colours of the air,
 Which to those who journey near,
 Barren, brown, and rough appear ;

Still we tread the same coarse way,
The present 's still a cloudy day.

O may I with myself agree,
And never covet what I see ;
Content me with an humble shade,
My passions tam'd, my wishes laid ;
For, while our wishes wildly roll,
We banish quiet from the soul :
'T is thus the busy beat the air,
And misers gather wealth and care.

Now, ev'n now, my joys run high,
As on the mountain-turf I lie ;
While the wanton Zephyr sings,
And in the vale perfumes his wings ;
While the waters murmur deep ;
While the shepherd charms his sheep ;
While the birds unbounded fly,
And with music fill the sky,
Now, e'en now, my joys run high.

Be full, ye courts ; be great who will ;
Search for Peace with all your skill :
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor.
In vain you search, she is not there ;
In vain ye search the domes of Care !
Grass and flowers Quiet treads,
On the meads, and mountain-heads,
Along with Pleasure, close ally'd,
Ever by each other's side :
And often, by the murmuring rill,
Hears the thrush, while all is still,
Within the groves of Grongar Hill.

THE RUINS OF ROME.

Aspice murorum moles, præruptaque saxa,
 Obrutaque horrenti vesta theatra situ :
 Hæc sunt Roma. Viden' velut ipsa cadavera tantæ
 Urbis adhuc spirent imperiosa minas?

JANUS VITALIS.

ENOUGH of Grongar, and the shady dales
 Of winding Towy : Merlin's fabled haunt
 I sing inglorious. Now the love of arts,
 And what in metal or in stone remains
 Of proud antiquity, through various realms
 And various languages and ages fam'd,
 Bears me remote, o'er Gallia's woody bounds,
 O'er the cloud-piercing Alps remote ; beyond
 The vale of Arno purpled with the vine,
 Beyond the Umbrian and Etruscan hills,
 To Latium's wide champain, forlorn and waste,
 Where yellow Tiber his neglected wave
 Mournfully rolls. Yet once again, my Muse,
 Yet once again, and soar a loftier flight ;
 Lo the resistless theme, imperial Rome.

Fall'n, fall'n, a silent heap ; her heroes all
 Sunk in their urns ; behold the pride of pomp,
 The throne of nations fall'n ; obscur'd in dust ;
 E'en yet majestic : the solemn scene
 Elates the soul, while now the rising Sun
 Flames on the ruins in the purer air
 Towering aloft, upon the glittering plain,
 Like broken rocks, a vast circumference :
 Rent palaces, crush'd columns, rifled moles,
 Fanes roll'd on fanes, and tombs on buried tombs.

Deep lies in dust the Theban obelisk
Immense along the waste ; minuter art,
Gliconian forms, or Phidian subtly fair,
O'erwhelming ; as th' immense Leviathan
The finny brood, when near Ierne's shore
Outstretch'd, unwieldy, his island-length appears
Above the foamy flood. Globose and huge,
Gray mouldering temples swell, and wide o'er cast
The solitary landscape, hills and woods,
And boundless wilds ; while the vine-mantled brows
The pendent goats unveil, regardless they
Of hourly peril, though the clefted domes
Tremble to every wind. The pilgrim oft
At dead of night, 'mid his orison hears
Aghast the voice of Time, disparting towers,
Tumbling all precipitate down-dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thundering to the Moon ;
While murmurs soothe each awful interval
Of ever-falling waters ; shrouded Nile,
Eridanus, and Tiber with his twins,
And palmy Euphrates * ; they with drooping locks
Hang o'er their urns, and mournfully among
The plaintive-echoing ruins pour their streams.

Yet here, adventurous in the sacred search
Of ancient arts, the delicate of mind,
Curious and modest, from all climes resort.
Grateful society ! with these I raise
The toilsome step up the proud Palatin,
Through spiry cypress groves, and towering pine,

* Fountains at Rome adorned with the statues
of those rivers.

Waving aloft o'er the big ruin's brows,
On numerous arches rear'd : and frequent stopp'd,
The sunk ground startles me with dreadful chasm,
Breathing forth darkness from the vast profound
Of aisles and halls, within the mountain's womb.
Nor these the nether works ; all these beneath,
And all beneath the vales and hills around,
Extend the cavern'd sewers, massy, firm,
As the Sibylline grot beside the dead
Lake of Avernus ; such the sewers huge,
Whither the great Tarquinian genius dooms
Each wave impure ; and proud with added rains,
Hark how the mighty billows lash their vaults,
And thunder ; how they heave their rocks in vain !
Though now incessant time has roll'd around
A thousand winters o'er the changeful world,
And yet a thousand since, th' indignant floods
Roar loud in their firm bounds, and dash and swell,
In vain ; convey'd to Tiber's lowest wave.

Hence over airy plains, by crystal founts,
That weave their glittering waves with tuneful lapse,
Among the sleeky pebbles, agate clear,
Cerulean ophite, and the flowery vein
Of orient jasper, pleas'd I move along,
And vases boss'd, and huge inscriptive stones,
And intermingling vines ; and figur'd nymphs,
Floras and Chloes of delicious mould,
Cheering the darkness ; and deep empty tombs,
And dells, and mouldering shrines, with old decay
Rustic and green, and wide-embowering shades,
Shot from the crooked clefts of nodding towers.
A solemn wilderness ! with error sweet,

I wind the lingering step, where'er the path
Mazy conducts me, which the vulgar foot
O'er sculptures maim'd has made ; Anubis, Sphinx,
Idols of antique guise, and horned Pan,
Terrific, monstrous shapes ! preposterous gods
Of Fear and Ignorance, by the sculptor's hand
Hewn into form, and worshipp'd ; as e'en now
Blindly they worship at their breathless mouths *
In varied appellations : men to these
(From depth to depth in darkening error fall'n)
At length ascrib'd th' inapplicable name.

How doth it please and fill the memory
With deeds of brave renown, while on each hand
Historic urns and breathing statues rise,
And speaking busts ! Sweet Scipio, Marius stern,
Pompey superb, the spirit-stirring form
Of Cæsar raptur'd with the charm of rule
And boundless fame ; impatient for exploits,
His eager eyes upcast, he soars in thought
Above all height : and his own Brutus see,
Desponding Brutus, dubious of the right,
In evil days, of faith, of public weal,
Solicitous and sad. Thy next regard
Be Tully's graceful attitude ; unprais'd,
His outstretch'd arm he waves, in act to speak
Before the silent masters of the world,
And Eloquence arrays him. There behold,
Prepar'd for combat in the front of war,
The pious brothers ; jealous Alba stands

* Several statues of the Pagan gods have been converted into images of saints.

In fearful expectation of the strife,
And youthful Rome intent : the kindred foes
Fall on each other's neck in silent tears ;
In sorrowful benevolence embrace —
Howe'er, they soon unsheath the flashing sword,
Their country calls to arms ; — now all in vain
The mother clasps the knee, and e'en the fair
Now weeps in vain ; their country calls to arms.
Such virtue Clelia, Cocles, Manlius, rous'd :
Such were the Fabii, Decii ; so inspir'd,
The Scipios battled, and the Gracchi spoke :
So rose the Roman state. Me now, of these
Deep musing, high ambitious thoughts inflame
Greatly to serve my country, distant land,
And build me virtuous fame ; nor shall the dust
Of these fall'n piles with show of sad decay
Avert the good resolve, mean argument,
The fate alone of matter. — Now the brow
We gain enraptur'd ; beauteously distinct *
The numerous porticoes and domes upswell,
With obelisks and columns interpos'd,
And pine, and fir, and oak : so fair a scene
Sees not the dervise from the spiral tomb
Of ancient Chammos, while his eye beholds
Proud Memphis' reliques o'er th' Egyptian plain :
Nor hoary hermit from Hymettus' brow,
Though graceful Athens in the vale beneath.
Along the windings of the Muse's stream,
Lucid Illyssus weeps her silent schools,

* From the Palatin hill one sees most of the remarkable antiquities.

And groves, unvisited by bard or sage.
Amid the towery ruins, huge, supreme,
Th' enormous amphitheatre behold,
Mountainous pile ! o'er whose capacious womb
Pours the broad firmament its varied light ;
While from the central floor the seats ascend
Round above round, slow-widening to the verge
A circuit vast and high ; nor less had held
Imperial Rome, and her attendant realms,
When drunk with rule she will'd the fierce delight,
And op'd the gloomy caverns, whence out-rush'd
Before th' innumerable shouting crowd
The fiery, maddened, tyrants of the wilds,
Lions and tygers, wolves and elephants,
And desperate men, more fell. Abhorr'd intent !
By frequent converse with familiar death,
To kindle brutal daring apt for war ;
To lock the breast, and steel th' obdurate heart
Amid the piercing cries of sore distress
Impenetrable. — But away thine eye ;
Behold yon steepy cliff ; the modern pile
Perchance may now delight, while that *, rever'd
In ancient days, the page alone declares,
Or narrow coin through dim cerulean rust.
The fane was Jove's, its spacious golden roof,
O'er thick-surrounding temples beaming wide,
Appear'd, as when above the morning hills
Half the round Sun ascends ; and tower'd aloft,
Sustain'd by columns huge, innumerable
As cedars proud on Canaan's verdant heights

* The Capitol.

Darkening their idols, when Astarte lur'd
Too-prosperous Israel from his living strength.

And next regard yon venerable dome,
Which virtuous Latium, with erroneous aim,
Rais'd to her various deities, and nam'd
Pantheon ; plain and round ; of this our world
Majestic emblem ; with peculiar grace
Before its ample orb, projected stands
The many-pillar'd portal : noblest work
Of human skill : here, curious architect,
If thou essay'st, ambitious, to surpass
Palladius, Angelus, or British Jones,
On these fair walls extend the certain scale,
And turn th' instructive compass : careful mark
How far in hidden art, the noble plain
Extends, and where the lovely forms commence
Of flowing sculpture : nor neglect to note
How range the taper columns, and what weight
Their leafy brows sustain : fair Corinth first
Boasted their order, which Callimachus
(Reclining studious on Asopus' banks
Beneath an urn of some lamented nymph)
Haply compos'd ; the urn with foliage curl'd
Thinly conceal'd, the chapter inform'd.

See the tall obelisks from Memphis old,
One stone enormous each, or Thebes convey'd ;
Like Albion's spires they rush into the skies.
And there the temple *, where the summon'd state
In deep of night conven'd : e'en yet methinks

* The Temple of Concord, where the senate met
on Catiline's conspiracy.

The vehement orator in rent attire
 Persuasion pours, Ambition sinks her crest ;
 And lo the villain, like a troubled sea,
 That tosses up her mire ! Ever disguis'd,
 Shall Treason walk ? Shall proud Oppression yoke
 The neck of Virtue ? Lo the wretch, abash'd,
 Self-betray'd Catiline ! O Liberty,
 Parent of Happiness, celestial-born ;
 When the first man became a living soul,
 His sacred genius thou ; — be Britain's care ;
 With her, secure, prolong thy lov'd retreat ;
 Thence bless mankind ; while yet among her sons,
 E'en yet there are, to shield thine equal laws,
 Whose bosoms kindle at the sacred names
 Of Cecil, Raleigh, Walsingham, and Drake.
 May others more delight in tuneful airs ;
 In masque and dance excel ; to sculptur'd stone
 Give with superior skill the living look ;
 More pompous piles erect, or pencil soft
 With warmer touch the visionary board :
 But thou, thy nobler Britons teach to rule ;
 To check the ravage of tyrannic sway ;
 To quell the proud ; to spread the joys of peace,
 And various blessings of ingenious trade.
 Be these our arts ; and ever may we guard,
 Ever defend thee with undaunted heart !
 Inestimable good ! who giv'st us Truth,
 Whose hand upleads to light, divinest Truth,
 Array'd in every charm : whose hand benign
 Teaches unwearied Toil to clothe the fields,
 And on his various fruits inscribes the name
 Of Property : O nobly hail'd of old

By thy majestic daughters, Judah fair,
And Tyrus and Sidonia, lovely nymphs,
And Libya bright, and all-enchancing Greece,
Whose numerous towns and isles, and peopled seas,
Rejoic'd around her lyre ; th' heroic note
(Smit with sublime delight) Ausonia caught,
And plann'd imperial Rome. Thy hand benign
Rear'd up her towery battlements in strength ;
Bent her wide bridges o'er the swelling stream
Of Tuscan Tiber ; thine those solemn domes
Devoted to the voice of humbler prayer !
And thine those piles * undeck'd, capacious, vast,
In days of dearth where tender Charity
Dispens'd her timely succours to the poor.
Thine too those musically falling founts,
To slake the clammy lip ; adown they fall,
Musical ever ; while from yon blue hills
Dim in the clouds, the radiant aqueducts
Turn their innumerable arches o'er
The spacious desert, brightening in the Sun,
Proud and more proud in their august approach :
High o'er irriguous vales and woods and towns,
Glide the soft whispering waters in the wind,
And here united pour their silver streams
Among the figur'd rocks, in murmuring falls,
Musical ever. These thy beauteous works :
And what beside felicity could tell
Of human benefit : more late the rest ;
At various times their turrets chanc'd to rise,
When impious Tyranny vouchsaf'd to smile.

* The public granaries.

Behold by Tiber's flood, where modern Rome *
 Couches beneath the ruins : there of old
 With arms and trophies gleam'd the field of Mars :
 There to their daily sports the noble youth
 Rush'd emulous ; to fling the pointed lance ;
 To vault the steed ; or with the kindling wheel
 In dusty whirlwinds sweep the trembling goal ;
 Or, wrestling, cope with adverse swelling breasts,
 Strong grappling arms, close heads, and distant feet ;
 Or clash the lifted gauntlets : there they form'd
 Their ardent virtues : in the bossy piles,
 The proud triumphal arches ; all their wars,
 Their conquests, honours, in the sculptures live.
 And see from every gate those ancient roads,
 With tombs high verg'd, the solemn paths of Fame :
 Deserve they not regard ? O'er whose broad flints
 Such crowds have roll'd, so many storms of war ;
 So many pomps ; so many wondering realms :
 Yet still through mountains pierc'd, o'er valleys
 rais'd,
 In even state, to distant seas around, [Peace †,
 They stretch their pavements. Lo, the fane of
 Built by that prince, who to the trust of power
 Was honest, the delight of human-kind.
 Three nodding aisles remain ; the rest a heap
 Of sand and weeds ; her shrines, her radiant roofs,
 And columns proud, that from her spacious floor,
 As from a shining sea, majestic rose

* Modern Rome stands chiefly on the old Campus Martius.

† Begun by Vespasian, and finished by Titus.

A hundred foot aloft, like stately beech
 Around the brim of Dion's glassy lake,
 Charming the mimic painter : on the walls
 Hung Salem's sacred spoils ; the golden board,
 And golden trumpets, now conceal'd, entomb'd
 By the sunk roof. — O'er which in distant view
 Th' Etruscan mountains swell, with ruins crown'd
 Of ancient towns ; and blue Soracte spires,
 Wrapping his sides in tempests. Eastward hence,
 Nigh where the Cestian pyramid * divides
 The mouldering wall, beyond yon fabric huge,
 Whose dust the solemn antiquarian turns,
 And thence, in broken sculptures cast abroad,
 Like Sibyl's leaves, collects the builder's name
 Rejoic'd, and the green medals frequent found
 Doom Caracalla to perpetual fame :
 The stately pines, that spread their branches wide
 In the dun ruins of its ample halls †,
 Appear but tufts ; as may whate'er is high
 Sink in comparison, minute and vile.

These, and unnumber'd, yet their brows uplift,
 Rent of their graces ; as Britannia's oaks
 On Merlin's mount, or Snowdon's rugged sides,
 Stand in the clouds, their branches scatter'd round,
 After the tempest ; Mausoleums, Cirques,
 Naumachios, Forums ; Trajan's column tall,
 From whose low base the sculptures wind aloft,
 And lead through various toils, up the rough steep,

* The tomb of Cestius, partly within and partly without the walls.

† The baths of Caracalla, a vast ruin.

Its hero to the skies: and his dark tower *
 Whose execrable hand the city fir'd,
 And while the dreadful conflagration blaz'd,
 Play'd to the flames; and Phœbus' letter'd dome †;
 And the rough reliques of Carinæ's street,
 Where now the shepherd to his nibbling sheep
 Sits piping with his oaten reed; as erst
 There pip'd the shepherd to his nibbling sheep,
 When th' humble roof Anchises' son explor'd
 Of good Evander, wealth-despising king,
 Amid the thickets: so revolves the scene;
 So Time ordains, who rolls the things of pride
 From dust again to dust. Behold that heap
 Of mouldering urns (their ashes blown away,
 Dust of the mighty) the same story tell;
 And at its base, from whence the serpent glides
 Down the green desert street, yon hoary monk
 Laments the same, the vision as he views,
 The solitary, silent, solemn scene,
 Where Cæsars, heroes, peasants, hermits lie,
 Blended in dust together; where the slave
 Rests from his labours; where th' insulting proud
 Resigns his power; the miser drops his hoard;
 Where human folly sleeps. — There is a mood,
 (I sing not to the vacant and the young,)
 There is a kindly mood of melaucholy,
 That wings the soul, and points her to the skies;
 When tribulation clothes the child of man,
 When age descends with sorrow to the grave,
 'T is sweetly-soothing sympathy to pain,

* Nero's.

† The Palatin library.

A gently-wakening call to health and ease.
How musical ! when all-devouring Time,
Here sitting on his throne of ruins hoar,
While winds and tempests sweep his various lyre,
How sweet thy diapason, Melancholy !
Cool evening comes ; the setting Sun displays
His visible great round between yon towers,
As through two shady cliffs ; away, my Muse,
Though yet the prospect pleases, ever new
In vast variety, and yet delight
The many-figur'd sculptures of the path
Half beauteous, half effac'd ; the traveller
Such antique marbles to his native land
Oft hence conveys ; and every realm and state
With Rome's august remains, heroes and gods,
Deck their long galleries and winding groves ;
Yet miss we not th' innumerable thefts,
Yet still profuse of graces teems the waste.

Suffice it now th' Esquilian mount to reach
With weary wing, and seek the sacred rests
Of Maro's humble tenement ; a low
Plain wall remains ; a little sun-gilt heap,
Grotesque and wild ; the gourd and olive brown
Weave the light roof : the gourd and olive fan
Their amorous foliage, mingling with the vine,
Who drops her purple clusters through the green.
Here let me lie, with pleasing fancy sooth'd :
Here flow'd his fountain ; here his laurels grew ;
Here oft the meek good man, the lofty bard
Fram'd the celestial song, or social walk'd
With Horace and the ruler of the world :
Happy Augustus ! who, so well inspir'd,

* The temple of Romulus and Remus under Mount Palatin.

The conquests, glories, of th' Ausonian state,
Wrapp'd in their secret seeds. Each kindred soul,
Robust and stout, ye grapple to your hearts,
And little Rome appears. Her cots arise,
Green twigs of osier weave the slender walls,
Green rushes spread the roofs ; and here and there
Opens beneath the rock the gloomy cave.
Elate with joy Etruscan Tiber views
Her spreading scenes enamelling his waves,
Her huts and hollow dells, and flocks and herds,
And gathering swains ; and rolls his yellow car
To Neptune's court with more majestic train.

Her speedy growth alarm'd the states around,
Jealous ; yet soon, by wondrous virtue won,
They sink into her bosom. From the plough^{*}
Rose her dictators ; fought, o'ercame, return'd,
Yes, to the plough return'd, and hail'd their peers ;
For then no private pomp, no household state,
The public only swell'd the generous breast.
Who has not heard the Fabian heroes sung ?
Dentatus' scars, or Mutius' flaming hand ?
How Manlius sav'd the Capitol ? the choice
Of steady Regulus ? As yet they stood,
Simple of life ; as yet seducing wealth
Was unexplor'd, and shame of poverty
Yet unimagin'd. — Shine not all the fields
With various fruitage ? murmur not the brooks
Along the flowery valleys ? They, content,
Feasted at Nature's hand, indelicate,
Blithe, in their easy taste ; and only sought
To know their duties ; that their only strife,
Their generous strife, and greatly to perform.

They through all shapes of peril and of pain,
 Intent on honour, dar'd in thickest death
 To snatch the glorious deed. Nor Trebia quell'd,
 Nor Thrasymene, nor Cannæ's bloody field,
 Their dauntless courage ; storming Hannibal
 In vain the thunder of the battle roll'd,
 The thunder of the battle they return'd
 Back on his Punic shores ; till Carthage fell,
 And danger fled afar. The city gleam'd
 With precious spoils : alas, prosperity !
 Ah, baneful state ! yet ebb'd not all their strength
 In soft luxurious pleasures ; proud desire
 Of boundless sway, and feverish thirst of gold,
 Rous'd them again to battle. Beauteous Greece,
 Torn from her joys, in vain with languid arm
 Half rais'd her rusty shield ; nor could avail
 The sword of Dacia, nor the Parthian dart ;
 Nor yet the car of that fam'd British chief,
 Which seven brave years, beneath the doubtful wing
 Of Victory, dreadful roll'd its griding wheels
 Over the bloody war : the Roman arms
 Triumph'd, till Fame was silent to their foes.

And now the world unrivall'd they enjoy'd
 In proud security : the crested helm,
 The plated greave and corslet hung unbrac'd ;
 Nor clank'd their arms, the spear and sounding shield,
 But on the glittering trophy to the wind.

Dissolv'd in ease and soft delights they lie,
 Till every sun annoys, and every wind
 Has chilling force, and every rain offends :
 For now the frame no more is girt with strength
 Masculine, nor in lustiness of heart

Laughs at the winter storm, and summer-beam,
Superior to their rage : enfeebling vice
Withers each nerve, and opens every pore
To painful feeling : flowery bowers they seek
(As ether prompts, as the sick sense approves)
Or cool Nymphæan grots ; or tepid baths
(Taught by the soft Ionians) ; they, along
The lawny vale, of every beauteous stone,
Pile in the roseat air with fond expense :
Through silver channels glide the vagrant waves,
And fall on silver beds crystalline down,
Melodious murmuring ; while Luxury
Over their naked limbs with wanton hand
Sheds roses, odours, sheds unheeded bane.

Swift is the flight of wealth ; unnumber'd wants,
Brood of voluptuousness, cry out aloud
Necessity, and seek the splendid bribe.
The citron board, the bowl emboss'd with gems,
And tender foliage wildly wreath'd around
Of seeming ivy, by that artful hand,
Corinthian Thericles ; whate'er is known
Of rarest acquisition ; Tyrian garbs,
Neptunian Albion's high testaceous food,
And flavour'd Chian wines with incense fum'd
To slake patrician thirst ; for these, their rights
In the vile streets they prostitute to sale,
Their ancient rights, their dignities, their laws,
Their native glorious freedom. Is there none,
Is there no villain, that will bind the neck
Stretch'd to the yoke ? they come ; the market throngs.
But who has most by fraud or force amass'd ?
Who most can charm corruption with his doles ?

He be the monarch of the state ; and lo !
 Didius *, vile usurer, through the crowd he mounts,
 Beneath his feet the Roman eagle cowers,
 And the red arrows fill his grasp uncouth.
 O Britons, O my countrymen, beware ;
 Gird, gird your hearts ; the Romans once were free,
 Were brave, were virtuous. — Tyranny, howe'er,
 Deign'd to walk forth awhile in pageant state,
 And with licentious pleasures fed the rout,
 The thoughtless many : to the wanton sound
 Of fifes and drums they danc'd, or in the shade
 Sung Cæsar, great and terrible in war,
 Immortal Cæsar ! Lo, a god, a god,
 He cleaves the yielding skies ! Cæsar meanwhile
 Gathers the ocean pebbles ; or the gnat
 Enrag'd pursues ; or at his lonely meal
 Starves a wide province ; tastes, dislikes, and flings
 To dogs and sycophants. A god, a god !
 The flowery shades and shrines obscene return,

But see along the north the tempests swell
 O'er the rough Alps, and darken all their snows !
 Sudden the Goth and Vandal, dreaded names,
 Rush as the breach of waters, whelming all
 Their domes, their villas ; down the festive piles,
 Down fall their Parian porches, gilded baths,
 And roll before the storm in clouds of dust.

Vain end of human strength, of human skill,
 Conquest, and triumph, and domain, and pomp,
 And ease, and luxury ! O Luxury,
 Bane of elated life, of affluent states,

- Didius Julianus, who bought the empire.

What dreary change, what ruin is not thine ?
How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind !
To the soft entrance of thy rosy cave
How dost thou lure the fortunate and great !
Dreadful attraction ! while behind thee gapes
Th' unfathomable gulph where Asher lies
O'erwhelm'd, forgotten ; and high-boasting Cham ;
And Elam's haughty pomp ; and beauteous Greece ;
And the great queen of Earth, imperial Rome.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, a popular and agreeable poet, was born at Hales-Owen, Shropshire, in 1714. His father was an uneducated gentleman farmer, who cultivated an estate of his own, called the Leasowes. William, after passing through other instruction, was removed to that of a clergyman at Solihull, from whom he acquired a fund of classical literature, together with a taste for the best English writers. In 1732 he was entered of Pembroke College, Oxford, where he formed one of a set of young men who met in the evenings at one another's chambers, and read English works in polite literature. He also began to exercise his poetical talent upon some light topics; but coming to the possession of his paternal property, with some augmentation, he indulged himself in rural retirement, and forgetting his calls to college residence, he took up his abode at a house of his own, and commenced gentleman. In 1737 he printed anonymously a small volume of juvenile poems, which was little noticed. His first visit to London, in 1740, introduced him to the acquaintance of Dodsley, who printed his "Judgment of Hercules," dedicated to

his Hagley neighbour, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Littleton. It was followed by a work written before it, "The School-mistress," a piece in Spenser's style and stanza, the heroine of which was a village dame, supposed to have given him his first instruction. The vein of benevolence and good sense, and the touches of the pathetic, by which this performance is characterised, render it extremely pleasing, and perhaps place it at the head of his compositions.

After amusing himself with a few rambles to places of public resort, Shenstone now sat down to the life which he invariably pursued, and which consisted in improving the picturesque beauties of the Leasowes, exercising his pen in casual effusions of verse and prose, and cultivating such society as lay within his reach. The fame of the Leasowes was widely spread by an elaborate description of Dodsley's, which drew multitudes of visitors to the place; and the house being originally only a farm, became inadequate to his grounds, and required enlargement. Hence he lay continually under the pressure of narrow circumstances, which preyed upon his spirits, and rendered him by no means a happy inhabitant of the little Eden he had created. Gray, from the perusal of his letters, deduces the following, perhaps too satirical, account. "Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned, but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it."

Shenstone died of a fever in February, 1763, in his fiftieth year, and was interred in the churchyard of Hales-Owen. Monuments to his memory were erected by several persons who loved the man, and esteemed his poetry. Of the latter, the general opinion is now nearly uniform. It is regarded as commonly correct, elegant, melodious, and tender in sentiment, and often pleasing and natural in description, but verging to the languid and feeble. His prose writings, published in a separate volume, display good sense and cultivated taste, and sometimes contain new and acute observations on mankind.

THE SCHOOL-MISTRESS.

IN IMITATION OF SPENSER.

Auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ fientes in limine primo. VIRG.

Advertisement.

What particulars in Spenser were imagined most proper for the author's imitation on this occasion, are his language, his simplicity, his manner of description, and a peculiar tenderness of sentiment remarkable throughout his works.

AN me ! full sorely is my heart forlorn,
To think how modest Worth neglected lies,
While partial Fame doth with her blasts adorn
Such deeds alone, as pride and pomp disguise ;
Deeds of ill sort, and mischievous emprise :
Lend me thy clarion, goddess ! let me try
To sound the praise of Merit, ere it dies,
Such as I oft have chaunced to espy,
Lost in the dreary shades of dull Obscurity.

In every village mark'd with little spire,
Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to Fame,
There dwells in lowly shed, and mean attire,
A matron old, whom we School-mistress name ;
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame ;
They griev'd sore, in piteous durance pent,
Aw'd by the power of this relentless dame ;
And oft-times, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
Which Learning near her little dome did stowe ;
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
Though now so wide its waving branches flow ;
And work the simple vassal's mickle woe ;
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,
But their limbs shudder'd, and their pulse beat
low ;

And as they look'd they found their horror grew,
And shap'd it into rods, and tingled at the view.

So have I seen (who has not, may conceive)
A lifeless phantom near a garden plac'd ;
So doth it wanton birds of peace bereave,
Of sport, of song, of pleasure, of repast ;
They start, they stare, they wheel, they look
aghast ;
Sad servitude ! such comfortless annoy
May no bold Briton's riper age e'er taste !
Ne superstition clog his dance of joy,
No vision empty, vain, his native bliss destroy.

Near to this dome is found a patch so green,
On which the tribe their gambols do display ;
And at the door imprisoning-board is seen,
Lest weakly wights of smaller size should stray ;
Eager, perdie, to bask in sunny day !
The noises intermixed, which thence resound,
Do Learning's little tenement betray ;
Where sits the dame, disguis'd in look profound,
And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel
around.

Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,
Emblem right meet of decency does yield :
Her apron dy'd in grain, as blue, I trowe,
As is the hare-bell that adorns the field :
And in her hand, for sceptre, she does wield
Tway birchen sprays ; with anxious fear entwin'd,
With dark distrust, and sad repentance fill'd ;
And stedfast hate, and sharp affliction join'd,
And fury uncontroul'd, and chastisement unkind.

Few but have ken'd, in semblance meet pour-
tray'd,
The childish faces of old Eol's train ;
Libs, Notus, Auster : these in frowns array'd,
How then would fare or Earth, or Sky, or Main,
Were the stern god to give his slaves the rein ?
And were not she rebellious breasts to quell,
And were not she her statutes to maintain,
The cot no more, I ween, were deem'd the cell,
Where comely peace of mind, and decent order dwell.

A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown ;
A russet kirtle fenc'd the nipping air ;
'T was simple russet, but it was her own ;
'T was her own country bred the flock so fair !
'T was her own labour did the fleece prepare ;
And, sooth to say, her pupils, rang'd around,
Through pious awe, did term it passing rare ;
For they in gaping wonderment abound,
And think, no doubt, she been the greatest wight on
ground.

Albeit ne flattery did corrupt her truth,
Ne pompous title did debauch her ear ;
Goody, good-woman, gossip, n'aunt, forsooth,
Or dame, the sole additions she did hear ;
Yet these she challeng'd, these she held right dear :
Ne would esteem him act as mought behove,
Who should not honour'd eld with these revere :
For never title yet so mean could prove,
But there was eke a mind which did that title love.

One ancient hen she took delight to feed,
The plodding pattern of the busy dame ;
Which, ever and anon, impell'd by need,
Into her school, begirt with chickens, came !
Such favour did her past deportment claim :
And, if Neglect had lavish'd on the ground
Fragment of bread, she would collect the same ;
For well she knew, and quaintly could expound,
What sin it were to waste the smallest crumb she
found.

Herbs too she knew, and well of each could speak
That in her garden sipp'd the silvery dew ;
Where no vain flower disclos'd a gaudy streak ;
But herbs for use, and physic, not a few,
Of grey renown, within those borders grew :
The tufted basil, pun-provoking thyme,
Fresh baum, and marygold of cheerful hue ;
The lowly gill, that never dares to climb ;
And more I fain would sing, disdaining here to
rhyme.

Yet euphrasy may not be left unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander leagues around ;
And pungent radish, biting infants' tongue ;
And plantain ribb'd, that heals the reaper's wound ;
And marjoram sweet, in shepherd's posie found ;
And lavender, whose spikes of azure bloom
Shall be, ere-while, in arid bundles bound,
To lurk amidst the labours of her loom,
And crown her kerchiefs clean, with mickle rare per-
fume.

And here trim rosemarine, that whilom crown'd
The daintiest garden of the proudest peer ;
Ere, driven from its envied site, it found
A sacred shelter for its branches here ;
Where edg'd with gold its glittering skirts appear,
Oh wassel days ! O customs meet and well !
Ere this was banish'd from its lofty sphere :
Simplicity then sought this humble cell,
Nor ever would she more withthane and lordling
dwell.

Here oft the dame, on Sabbath's decent eve,
Hymned such psalms as Sternhold forth did mete.
If winter 't were, she to her hearth did cleave,
But in her garden found a summer-seat :
Sweet melody ! to hear her then repeat
How Israel's sons, beneath a foreign king,
While taunting foe-men did a song entreat,
All, for the nonce, untuning every string,
Uphung their useless lyres — small heart had they
to sing.

For she was just, and friend to virtuous lore,
And pass'd much time in truly virtuous deed ;
And in those elfins' ears, would oft deplore
The times, when Truth by Popish rage did bleed ;
And tortious death was true Devotion's meed ;
And simple Faith in iron chains did mourn,
That nould on wooden image place her creed ;
And lawny saints in smouldering flames did
burn :

Ah ! dearest Lord, forefend, thilk days should e'er
return.

In elbow-chair, like that of Scottish stem
By the sharp tooth of cankering eld defac'd,
In which, when he receives his diadem,
Our sovereign prince and liefest liege is plac'd,
The matron sate ; and sonie with rank she grac'd,
(The source of children's and of courtiers' pride !)
Redress'd affronts, for vile affronts there pass'd ;
And warn'd them not the fretful to deride,
But love each other dear, whatever them betide.

Right well she knew each temper to descry ;
To thwart the proud, and the submiss to raise ;
Some with vile copper-prize exalt on high,
And some entice with pittance small of praise ;
And other some with baleful sprig she 'frays :
E'en absent, she the reins of power doth hold,
While with quaint arts the giddy crowd she sways :
Forewarn'd, if little bird their pranks behold,
'T will whisper in her ear, and all the scene unfold.

Lo now with state she utters the command !
Eftsoons the urchins to their tasks repair ;
Their books of stature small they take in hand,
Which with pellucid horn secured are,
To save from finger wet the letters fair :
The work so gay that on their back is seen,
St. George's high achievements does declare ;
On which thilk wight that has y-gazing been,
Kens the forth-coming rod, unpleasing sight, I ween !

Ah luckless he, and born beneath the beam
Of evil star ! it irks me whilst I write :
As erst the bard * by Mulla's silver stream,
Oft, as he told of deadly dolorous plight,
Sigh'd as he sung, and did in tears indite.
For brandishing the rod, she doth begin
To loose the brogues, the stripling's late delight !
And down they drop ; appears his dainty skin,
Fair as the furry-coat of whitest ermilin.

O ruthful scene ! when from a nook obscure,
His little sister doth his peril see :
All playful as she sate, she grows demure ;
She finds full soon her wonted spirits flee ;
She meditates a prayer to set him free :
Nor gentle pardon could this dame deny
(If gentle pardon could with dames agree)
To her sad grief that swells in either eye,
And wings her so that all for pity she could dye.

* Spenser.

No longer can she now her shrieks command;
And hardly she forbears, through awful fear,
To rushen forth, and, with presumptuous hand,
To stay harsh Justice in its mid career.
On thee she calls, on thee her parent dear!
(Ah! too remote to ward the shameful blow!)
She sees no kind domestic visage near,
And soon a flood of tears begins to flow;
And gives a loose at last to unavailing woe.

But ah! what pen his piteous plight may trace?
Or what device his loud laments explain?
The form uncouth of his disguised face?
The pallid hue that dyes his looks amain?
The plenteous shower that does his cheek dis-
tain?
When he, in abject wise, implores the dame,
Ne hopeth aught of sweet reprieve to gain;
Or when from high she levels well her aim,
And, through the thatch, his cries each falling
stroke proclaim.

The other tribe, aghast, with sore dismay,
Attend, and conn their tasks with mickle care:
By turns, astony'd, every twig survey,
And, from their fellows' hateful wounds, beware;
Knowing, I wist, how each the same may share;
Till fear has taught them a performance meet,
And to the well-known chest the dame repair;
Whence oft with sugar'd cates she doth them greet,
And ginger-bread y-rare; now certes, doubly sweet!

See to their seats they hie with merry glee,
 And in beseemly order sitten there ;
 All but the wight of bum y-galled, he
 Abhorreth bench, and stool, and fourm, and
 chair ;
 (This hand in mouth y-fix'd, that rends his hair ;)
 And eke with snubs profound, and heaving breast,
 Convulsions intermitting ! does declare
 His grievous wrong ; his dame's unjust behest ;
 And scorns her offer'd love, and shuns to be caress'd.

His face besprent with liquid crystal shines,
 His blooming face that seems a purple flower,
 Which low to earth its drooping head declines,
 All smear'd and sullied by a vernal shower.
 O the hard bosoms of despotic power !
 All, all, but she, the author of his shame,
 All, all, but she, regret this mournful hour :
 Yet hence the youth, and hence the flower shall
 claim,
 If so I deem aright, transcending worth and fame.

Behind some door, in melancholy thought,
 Mindless of food, he, dreary caitiff ! pines,
 Ne for his fellows' joyaunce careth aught,
 But to the wind all merriment resigns ;
 And deems it shame, if he to peace inclines :
 And many a sullen look ascance is sent,
 Which for his dame's annoyance he designs ;
 And still the more to pleasure him she's bent,
 The more doth he, perverse, her haviour past resent.

Ah me! how much I fear lest pride it be!
But if that pride it be, which thus inspires,
Beware, ye dames, with nice discernment see,
Ye quench not too the sparks of nobler fires:
Ah! better far than all the Muses' lyres,
All coward arts, is Valour's generous heat;
The firm fixt breast which fit and right requires,
Like Vernon's patriot soul! more justly great
Than Craft that pimps for ill, or flowery false Deceit.

Yet nurs'd with skill, what dazzling fruits appear!
E'en now sagacious Foresight points to show
A little bench of heedless bishops here,
And there a chancellor in embryo,
Or bard sublime, if bard may e'er be so,
As Milton, Shakspeare, names that ne'er shall die!
Though now he crawl along the ground so low,
Nor weeting how the Muse should soar on high,
Wisheth, poor starveling elf! his paper kite may
fly.

And this perhaps, who, censuring the design,
Low lays the house which that of cards doth build,
Shall Dennis be! if rigid Fate incline,
And many an epic to his rage shall yield;
And many a poet quit th' Aonian field;
And, sour'd by age, profound he shall appear,
As he who now with 'sdainful fury thrill'd
Surveys mine work; and levels many a sneer,
And furls his wrinkly front, and cries, "What
stuff is here?"

But now Dan Phœbus gains the middle skie,
And Liberty unbars her prison-door ;
And like a rushing torrent out they fly,
And now the grassy cirque had cover'd o'er
With boisterous revel-rout and wild uproar ;
A thousand ways in wanton rings they run,
Heaven shield their short-liv'd pastimes, I implore !

For well may Freedom erst so dearly won,
Appear to British elf more gladsome than the Sun.

Enjoy, poor imps ! enjoy your sportive trade,
And chase gay flies, and cull the fairest flowers ;
For when my bones in grass-green sods are laid,
For never may ye taste more careless hours
In knightly castles, or in ladies' bowers.
O vain to seek delight in earthly thing !
But most in courts where proud Ambition towers ;
Deluded wight ! who weens fair Peace can spring
Beneath the pompous dome of kesar or of king.

See in each sprite some various bent appear !
These rudely carol most incondite lay ;
Those sauntering on the green, with jocund leer
Salute the stranger passing on his way ;
Some builden fragile tenements of clay ;
Some to the standing lake their courses bend,
With pebbles smooth at duck and drake to play ;
Thilk to the huxter's savory cottage tend,
In pastry kings and queens th' allotted mite to spend.

Here, as each season yields a different store,
 Each season's stores in order ranged been;
 Apples with cabbage-net y-cover'd o'er,
 Galling full sore th' unmoney'd wight, are seen;
 And goose-b'rie clad in livery red or green;
 And here of lovely dye, the catharine pear,
 Fine pear! as lovely for thy juice, I ween:
 O may no wight e'er pennyless come there,
 Lest smit with ardent love he pine with hopeless care!

See! cherries here, ere cherries yet abound,
 With thread so white in tempting posies ty'd,
 Scattering like blooming maid their glances round,
 With pamper'd look draw little eyes aside;
 And must be bought, though penury betide.
 The plum all azure and the nut all brown,
 And here each season do those cakes abide,
 Whose honour'd names * th' inventive city own,
 Rendering through Britain's isle Salopia's praises
 known;

Admir'd Salopia! that with venial pride
 I yes her bright form in Severn's ambient wave,
 Farn'd for her loyal cares in perils try'd,
 Her daughters lovely, and her striplings brave:
 Ah! midst the rest, may flowers adorn his grave
 Whose heart did first these dulcet cates display!
 A motive fair to Learning's imps he gave,
 Who cheerless o'er her darkling region stray;
 Till Reason's morn arise, and light them on their
 way,

* Shrewsbury cakes.

ELEGY.

*Describing the sorrow of an ingenuous mind, on the
melancholy event of a licentious amour.*

WHY mourns my friend? why weeps his downcast
eye,

That eye where mirth, where fancy us'd to shine?
Thy cheerful meads reprove that swelling sigh;
Spring ne'er enamell'd fairer meads than thine.

Art thou not lodg'd in Fortune's warm embrace?
Wert thou not form'd by Nature's partial care?
Blest in thy song, and blest in every grace
That wins the friend, or that enchants the fair?

"Damon," said he, "thy partial praise restrain;
Not Damon's friendship can my peace restore;
Alas! his very praise awakes my pain,
And my poor wounded bosom bleeds the more.

"For oh! that Nature on my birth had frown'd,
Or Fortune fix'd me to some lowly cell;
Then had my bosom 'scap'd this fatal wound,
Nor had I bid these vernal sweets farewell.

"But led by Fortune's hand, her darling child,
My youth her vain licentious bliss admir'd;
In Fortune's train the syren Flattery smil'd,
And rashly hallow'd all her queen inspir'd.

"Of folly studious, e'en of vices vain,
Ah vices! gilded by the rich and gay!
I chas'd the guileless daughters of the plain,
Nor dropp'd the chase, till Jessy was my prey.

" Poor artless maid ! to stain thy spotless name,
Expense, and art, and toil, united strove ;
To lure a breast that felt the purest flame,
Sustain'd by virtue, but betray'd by love.

" School'd in the science of love's mazy wiles,
I cloth'd each feature with affected scorn ;
I spoke of jealous doubts, and fickle smiles,
And, feigning, left her anxious and forlorn.

" Then, while the fancy'd rage alarm'd her care,
Warm to deny, and zealous to disprove ;
I bade my words their wonted softness wear,
And seiz'd the minute of returning love.

" To thee, my Damon, dare I paint the rest ?
Will yet thy love a candid ear incline ?
Assur'd that virtue, by misfortune prest,
Feels not the sharpness of a pang like mine.

" Nine envious moons matur'd her growing shame ;
Ere-while to flaunt it in the face of day ;
When, scorn'd of virtue, stigmatiz'd by fame,
Low at my feet desponding Jessy lay.

" ' Henry,' she said, ' by thy dear form subdu'd,
See the sad reliques of a nymph undone !
I find, I find this rising sob renew'd :
I sigh in shades, and sicken at the Sun.

" ' Amid the dreary gloom of night, I cry,
When will the morn's once pleasing scenes return ?
Yet what can morn's returning ray supply,
But foes that triumph, or but friends that mourn !

“ ‘ Alas ! no more that joyous morn appears
That led the tranquil hours of spotless fame ;
For I have steep’d a father’s couch in tears,
And ting’d a mother’s glowing cheek with shame.

“ ‘ The vocal birds that raise their matin strain,
The sportive lambs, increase my pensive moan ;
All seem to chase me from the cheerful plain,
And talk of truth and innocence alone.

“ ‘ If through the garden’s flowery tribes I stray,
Where bloom the jasmines that could once allure,
Hope not to find delight in us, they say,
For we are spotless, Jessy ; we are pure.

“ ‘ Ye flowers ! that well reproach a nymph so frail ;
Say, could ye with my virgin fame compare ?
The brightest bud that scents the vernal gale
Was not so fragrant, and was not so fair.

“ ‘ Now the grave old alarm the gentler young ;
And all my fame’s abhorr’d contagion flee ;
Trembles each lip, and falters every tongue,
That bids the morn propitious smile on me.

“ ‘ Thus for your sake I shun each human eye ;
I bid the sweets of blooming youth adieu ;
To die I languish, but I dread to die,
Lest my sad fate should nourish pangs for you.

“ ‘ Raise me from earth ; the pains of want remove,
And let me silent seek some friendly shore :
There only, banish’d from the form I love,
My weeping virtue shall relapse no more.

“ ‘ Be but my friend ; I ask no dearer name ;
Be such the meed of some more artful fair ;
Nor could it heal my peace, or chase my shame,
That pity gave, what love refus'd to share.

“ ‘ Force not my tongue to ask its scanty bread ;
Nor hurl thy Jessy to the vulgar crew ;
Not such the parent's board at which I fed !
Not such the precept from his lips I drew !

“ ‘ Haply, when Age has silver'd o'er my hair,
Malice may learn to scorn so mean a spoil ;
Envy may slight a face no longer fair ;
And pity, welcome, to my native soil.’

“ She spoke — nor was I born of savage race ;
Nor could these hands a niggard boon assign ;
Grateful she clasp'd me in a last embrace,
And vow'd to waste her life in prayers for mine.

“ I saw her foot the lofty bark ascend ;
I saw her breast with every passion heave ;
I left her — torn from every earthly friend ;
Oh ! my hard bosom, which could bear to leave !

“ — Brief let me be ; the fatal storm arose ;
The billows rag'd, the pilot's art was vain ;
O'er the tall mast the circling surges close ;
My Jessy — floats upon the watery plain !

“ And see my youth's impetuous fires decay ;
Seek not to stop Reflection's bitter tear ;
But warn the frolic, and instruct the gay,
From Jessy floating on her watery bier !”

A PASTORAL BALLAD,

IN FOUR PARTS. 1743.

Arbusta humilesque myricæ. VIRG.

I. *ABSENCE.*

YE shepherds so cheerful and gay,
Whose flocks never carelessly roam;
Should Corydon's happen to stray,
Oh! call the poor wanderers home.
Allow me to muse and to sigh,
Nor talk of the change that ye find;
None once was so watchful as I;
I have left my dear Phyllis behind.

Now I know what it is, to have strove
With the torture of doubt and desire;
What it is to admire and to love,
And to leave her we love and admire.
Ah! lead forth my flock in the morn,
And the damps of each evening repel;
Alas! I am faint and forlorn:
—I have bade my dear Phyllis farewell.

Since Phyllis vouchsaf'd me a look,
I never once dreamt of my vine:
May I lose both my pipe and my crook,
If I knew of a kid that was mine!
I priz'd ev'ry hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are past, and I sigh;
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

But why do I languish in vain;
 Why wander thus pensively here?
 Oh! why did I come from the plain,
 Where I fed on the smiles of my dear?
 They tell me, my favourite maid,
 The pride of that valley, is flown;
 Alas! where with her I have stray'd,
 I could wander with pleasure, alone.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forego,
 What anguish I felt at my heart!
 Yet I thought — but it might not be so —
 'T was with pain that she saw me depart.
 She gaz'd, as I slowly withdrew;
 My path I could hardly discern;
 So sweetly she bade me adieu,
 I thought that she bade me return.

The pilgrim that journeys all day
 To visit some far distant shrine,
 If he bear but a relique away,
 Is happy, nor heard to repine.
 Thus widely remov'd from the fair,
 Where my vows, my devotion, I owe,
 Soft Hope is the relique I bear,
 And my solace wherever I go.

II. *HOPE.*

My banks they are furnish'd with bees,
 Whose murmur invites one to sleep;
 My grottoes are shaded with trees,
 And my hills are white over with sheep.

I seldom have met with a loss,
Such health do my fountains bestow :
My fountains all border'd with moss,
Where the hare-bells and violets grow.

Not a pine in my grove is there seen,
But with tendrils of woodbine is bound :
Not a beech's more beautiful green,
But a sweet-brier entwines it around.
Not my fields, in the prime of the year,
More charms than my cattle unfold ;
Not a brook that is limpid and clear,
But it glitters with fishes of gold.

One would think she might like to retire
To the bower I have labour'd to rear ;
Not a shrub that I heard her admire,
But I hasted and planted it there.
O how sudden the jessamine strove
With the lilac to render it gay !
Already it calls for my love,
To prune the wild branches away.

From the plains, from the woodlands and groves,
What strains of wild melody flow !
How the nightingales warble their loves
From thickets of roses that blow !
And when her bright form shall appear,
Each bird shall harmoniously join
In a concert so soft and so clear,
As — she may not be fond to resign.

I have found out a gift for my fair ;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed :
But let me that plunder forbear,
She will say 't was a barbarous deed.
For he ne'er could be true, she averr'd,
Who would rob a poor bird of its young :
And I lov'd her the more when I heard
Such tenderness fall from her tongue.

I have heard her with sweetness unfold
How that pity was due to — a dove :
That it ever attended the bold ;
And she call'd it the sister of love.
But her words such a pleasure convey,
So much I her accents adore,
Let her speak, and whatever she say,
Methinks I should love her the more.

Can a bosom so gentle remain
Unmov'd when her Corydon sighs ?
Will a nymph that is fond of the plain,
These plains and this valley despise ?
Dear regions of silence and shade !
Soft scenes of contentment and ease !
Where I could have pleasingly stray'd,
If aught, in her absence, could please.

But where does my Phyllida stray ?
And where are her grots and her bowers ?
Are the groves and the valleys as gay,
And the shepherds as gentle as ours ?

The groves may perhaps be as fair,
And the face of the valleys as fine ;
The swains may in manners compare,
But their love is not equal to mine.

III. SOLICITUDE.

WHY will you my passion reprove ?
Why term it a folly to grieve ?
Ere I show you the charms of my love,
She 's fairer than you can believe.
With her mien she enamours the brave ;
With her wit she engages the free ;
With her modesty pleases the grave ;
She is every way pleasing to me.

O you that have been of her train,
Come and join in my amorous lays ;
I could lay down my life for the swain,
That will sing but a song in her praise.
When he sings, may the nymphs of the town
Come trooping, and listen the while ;
Nay on him let not Phyllida frown ;
— But I cannot allow her to smile.

For when Paridel tries in the dance
Any favour with Phyllis to find,
O how, with one trivial glance,
Might she ruin the peace of my mind !
In ringlets he dresses his hair,
And his crook is bestudded around ;
And his pipe — oh my Phyllis, beware
Of a magic there is in the sound.

'T is his with mock passion to glow,
'T is his in smooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the snow,
And her bosom, be sure, is as cold.
How the nightingales labour the strain,
With the notes of his charmer to vie;
How they vary their accents in vain,
Repine at her triumphs, and die.

To the grove or the garden he strays,
And pillages every sweet;
Then, suiting the wreath to his lays,
He throws it at Phyllis's feet.
"O Phyllis," he whispers, "more fair,
More sweet than the jessamine's flower!
What are pinks in a morn to compare?
What is eglantine after a shower?"

"Then the lily no longer is white;
The rose is depriv'd of its bloom;
Then the violets die with despite,
And the woodbines give up their perfume."
Thus glide the soft numbers along,
And he fancies no shepherd his peer;
— Yet I never should envy the song,
Were not Phyllis to lend it an ear.

Let his crook be with hyacinths bound,
So Phyllis the trophy despise:
Let his forehead with laurels be crown'd,
So they shine not in Phyllis's eyes.

The language that flows from the heart,
 Is a stranger to Paridel's tongue ;
 — Yet may she beware of his art,
 Or sure I must envy the song.

IV. *DISAPPOINTMENT.*

Ye shepherds, give ear to my lay,
 And take no more heed of my sheep;
 They have nothing to do but to stray ;
 I have nothing to do but to weep.
 Yet do not my folly reprove ;
 She was fair — and my passion begun ;
 She smil'd — and I could not but love ;
 She is faithless — and I am undone.

Perhaps I was void of all thought :
 Perhaps it was plain to foresee,
 That a nymph so complete would be sought,
 By a swain more engaging than me.
 Ah ! love every hope can inspire ;
 It banishes wisdom the while ;
 And the lip of the nymph we admire
 Seems for ever adorn'd with a smile.

She is faithless, and I am undone ;
 Ye that witness the woes I endure,
 Let reason instruct you to shun
 What it cannot instruct you to cure.
 Beware how you loiter in vain
 Amid nymphs of a higher degree :
 It is not for me to explain
 How fair, and how fickle they be.

Alas ! from the day that we met,
What hope of an end to my woes ?
When I cannot endure to forget
The glance that undid my repose.
Yet time may diminish the pain :
The flower, and the shrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleasure in vain,
In time may have comfort for me.

The sweets of a dew-sprinkled rose,
The sound of a murmuring stream,
The peace which from solitude flows,
Henceforth shall be Corydon's theme.
High transports are shown to the sight,
But we 're not to find them our own ;
Fate never bestow'd such delight,
As I with my Phyllis had known.

O ye woods, spread your branches apace ;
To your deepest recesses I fly ;
I would hide with the beasts of the chase ;
I would vanish from every eye.
Yet my reed shall resound through the grove
With the same sad complaint it begun ;
How she smil'd — and I could not but love ;
Was faithless — and I am undone !

THE DYING KID.

*Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit ———* VIRG.

A TEAR bedews my Delia's eye,
To think yon playful kid must die ;
From crystal spring, and flowery mead,
Must, in his prime of life, recede !

Erewhile, in sportive circles round
She saw him wheel, and frisk, and bound ;
From rock to rock pursue his way,
And on the fearful margin play.

Pleas'd on his various freaks to dwell,
She saw him climb my rustic cell ;
Thence eye my lawns with verdure bright,
And seem all ravish'd at the sight.

She tells with what delight he stood
To trace his features in the flood ;
Then skipp'd aloof with quaint amaze,
And then drew near again to gaze.

She tells me how with eager speed
He flew to hear my vocal reed ;
And how with critic face profound,
And stedfast ear, devour'd the sound.

His every frolic, light as air,
Deserves the gentle Delia's care ;
And tears bedew her tender eye,
To think the playful kid must die. —

But knows my Delia, timely wise,
How soon this blameless era flies ?
While violence and craft succeed ;
Unfair design, and ruthless deed !

Soon would the vine his wounds deplore,
And yield her purple gifts no more ;
Ah ! soon, eras'd from every grove
Were Delia's name, and Strephon's love.

No more those bowers might Strephon see,
Where first he fondly gaz'd on thee ;
No more those beds of flowerets find,
Which for thy charming brows he twin'd.

Each wayward passion soon would tear
His bosom, now so void of care ;
And, when they left his ebbing vein,
What, but insipid age, remain ?

Then mourn not the decrees of Fate,
That gave his life so short a date ;
And I will join thy tenderest sighs,
To think that youth so swiftly flies !

REV. CHARLES CHURCHILL.

THE REV. CHARLES CHURCHILL, a poet, once of great repute, was the son of a curate of St. John's Westminster, in which parish he was born in 1731. He received his early education at the celebrated public school in the vicinity, whence he was sent to Oxford; but to this university he was refused admission on account of deficient classical knowledge. Returning to school, he soon closed his further education by an early and imprudent marriage. Receiving holy orders from the indulgence of Dr. Sherlock, he went down to a curacy in Wales, where he attempted to remedy the scantiness of his income, by the sale of cyder; but this expedient only plunged him deeper in debt. Returning to London, he was chosen, on his father's death, to succeed him as curate and lecturer of St. John's. His finances still falling short, he took various methods to improve them; at the same time he displayed an immoderate fondness for theatrical exhibitions. This latter passion caused him to think of exercising those talents which he was conscious of possessing; and in March, 1761, he published, though anonymously, a view of the excellencies and

defects of the actors in both houses, which he entitled "The Rosciad." It was much admired, and a second edition appeared with the author's name. Churchill was now at once raised from obscurity to eminence; and the *Rosciad*, which we have selected as his best work, is, in fact, the only one of his numerous publications on which he bestowed due labour. The delineations are drawn with equal energy and vivacity; the language and versification, though not without inequalities, are superior to the ordinary strain of current poetry, and many of the observations are stamped with sound judgment and correct taste.

The remainder of his life, though concurring with the period of his principal fame, is little worthy of notice. He became a party writer, joining with Wilkes and other oppositionists, and employed his pen assiduously in their cause. With this was joined a lamentable defect of moral feeling, exhibited by loose and irregular manners. Throwing off his black suit, he decorated his large and clumsy person with gold lace; and dismissing his wife, he debauched from her parents the daughter of a tradesman in Westminster. His writings at length became mere rhapsodies; and taking a journey to France for the purpose of visiting Mr. Wilkes, then an exile in that country, he was seized with a fever, which put a period to his life on November 4. 1764, at the age of 34.

THE ROSCIAD.

ROSCIUS deceas'd, each high aspiring play'r
Push'd all his int'rest for the vacant chair.
The buskin'd heroes of the mimic stage
No longer whine in love, and rant in rage ;
The monarch quits his throne, and condescends
Humbly to court the favour of his friends ;
For pity's sake tells undeserv'd mishaps,
And, their applause to gain, recounts his claps.
Thus the victorious chiefs of ancient Rome,
To win the mob, a suppliant's form assume,
In pompous strain fight o'er th' extinguish'd war,
And show where honour bled in ev'ry scar.

But though bare merit might in Rome appear
The strongest plea for favour, 'tis not here ;
We form our judgment in another way ;
And they will best succeed, who best can pay :
Those, who would gain the votes of British tribes,
Must add to force of merit, force of bribes.

What can an actor give ? In ev'ry age
Cash hath been rudely banish'd from the stage ;
Monarchs themselves, to grief of ev'ry play'r,
Appear as often as their image there :
They can't, like candidate for other seat,
Pour seas of wine, and mountains raise of meat.
Wine ! they could bribe you with the world as soon,
And of roast beef, they only know the tune :
But what they have they give ; could Clive do more,
Though for each million he had brought home four ?

Shuter keeps open house at Southwark fair,
 And hopes the friends of humour will be there ;
 In Smithfield, Yates prepares the rival treat
 For those who laughter love, instead of meat ;
 Foote, at Old House, for even Foote will be,
 In self-conceit, an actor, bribes with tea ;
 Which Wilkinson at second-hand receives,
 And at the New, pours water on the leaves.

The town divided, each runs sev'ral ways,
 As passion, humour, int'rest, party sways.
 Things of no moment, colour of the hair,
 Shape of a leg, complexion brown or fair,
 A dress well chosen, or a patch misplac'd,
 Conciliate favour, or create distaste.

From galleries loud peals of laughter roll,
 And thunder Shuter's praises — he 's so droll.
Embox'd, the ladies must have something smart,
 Palmer ! Oh ! Palmer tops the janty part.
 Seated in pit, the dwarf, with aching eyes,
 Looks up, and vows that Barry's out of size ;
 Whilst to six feet the vig'rous stripling grown,
 Declares that Garrick is another Coan. *

When place of judgment is by whim supply'd,
 And our opinions have their rise in pride ;
 When, in discoursing on each mimic elf,
 We praise and censure with an eye to self ;
 All must meet friends, and Ackman bids as fair
 In such a court, as Garrick, for the chair.

At length agreed, all squabbles to decide,
 By some one judge the cause was to be try'd ;

* John Coan, a dwarf, who died in 1764. C

But this their squabbles *did* afresh renew,
Who should be judge in such a trial : — Who ?

For Johnson some, but Johnson, it was fear'd,
Would be too grave ; and Sterne too gay appear'd :
Others for Francklin voted ; but 't was known,
He sicken'd at all triumphs but his own :
For Colman many, but the peevish tongue
Of prudent Age found out that he was young :
For Murphy some few *pilf'ring* wits declar'd,
Whilst Folly clapp'd her hands, and Wisdom
star'd.

To mischief train'd, e'en from his mother's womb,
Grown old in fraud, though yet in manhood's bloom,
Adopting arts, by which gay villains rise,
And reach the heights which honest men despise ;
Mute at the bar, and in the senate loud,
Dull 'mongst the dullest, proudest of the proud ;
A pert, prim, prater of the *northern* race,
Guilt in his heart, and famine in his face,
Stood forth : — and thrice he wav'd his lily hand —
And thrice he twirl'd his tye — thrice strok'd his
band —

“ At Friendship's call,” (thus oft with trait'rous
aim

Men, void of faith, usurp Faith's sacred name)
“ At Friendship's call I come, by Murphy sent,
Who thus by me *developes* his intent.
But lest, *transfus'd*, the spirit should be lost,
That spirit which in storms of *rhet'ric* tost,
Bounces about, and flies like bottled beer,
In his own words his own intentions hear.

" Thanks to my friends. — But to vile fortunes
born,

No robes of fur these shoulders must adorn.
Vain your applause, no aid from thence I draw ;
Vain all my wit, for what is wit in law ?
Twice (curs'd remembrance !) twice I strove to gain
Admittance 'mongst the law-instructed train,
Who, in the Temple and Gray's Inn, prepare
For clients' wretched feet the legal snare ;
Dead to those arts, which polish and refine,
Deaf to all worth, because that worth was *mine*,
Twice did those blockheads startle at my name,
And, foul rejection, gave me up to shame.
To laws and lawyers then I bad adieu,
And plans of far more lib'ral note pursue.
Who will may be a judge — my kindling breast
Burns for that chair which Roscius once possess'd.
Here give your votes, your int'rest *here* exert,
And let success for *once* attend desert."

With sleek appearance, and with ambling paces,
And, type of vacant head, with vacant face,
The Proteus Hill put in his *modest* plea, —
" Let Favour speak for others, Worth for me." —
For who, like him, his various powers could call
Into so many shapes, and shine in all ?
Who could so nobly grace the motley list,
Actor, inspector, doctor, botanist ?
Knows any one so well — sure no one knows, —
At once to *play, prescribe, compound, compose ?*
Who can — But Woodward came, — Hill slipp'd
away,
Melting like ghosts, before the rising day.

* With that *low* cunning, which in fools supplies,
And amply too, the place of being wise,
Which Nature, kind, indulgent parent, gave
To qualify the blockhead for a knave ; [charms,
With that *smooth* falsehood, whose appearance
And reason of each wholesome doubt disarms,
Which to the lowest depths of guile descends,
By vilest means pursues the vilest ends,
Wears Friendship's mask for purposes of spite,
Fawns in the day, and butchers in the night ;
With that *malignant* envy, which turns pale,
And sickens, even if a friend prevail,
Which merit and success pursues with hate,
And damns the worth it cannot imitate ;
With the *cold* caution of a coward's spleen,
Which fears not guilt, but always seeks a skreen,
Which keeps this maxim ever in her view —
What 's *basely* done, should be done *safely* too ;
With that *dull, rooted, callous* impudence,
Which, dead to shame, and ev'ry nicer sense,
Ne'er blush'd, unless, in spreading Vice's snares,
She blunder'd on some virtue *unawares* ;
With all these blessings, which we seldom find
Lavish'd by Nature on *one* happy mind,
A motley figure, of the Fribble tribe,
Which heart can scarce conceive, or pen describe,

* This severe character was intended for Mr. Fitzpatrick, a person who had rendered himself remarkable by his activity in the playhouse riots of 1763, relative to the taking half prices. He was the hero of Garrick's Fribbleriad. E.

Came *simp'ring* on ; to ascertain whose sex
 Twelve sage, *impanell'd* matrons would perplex.
 Nor *male*, nor *female* ; *neither*, and yet both ;
 Of *neuter* gender, though of *Irish* growth ;
 A six-foot suckling, mincing in *its* gait ;
 Affected, peevish, prim, and delicate ;
 Fearful *it* seem'd, though of athletic make,
 Lest *brutal breezes* should too roughly shake
Its tender form, and *savage* motion spread,
 O'er *its* pale cheeks, the horrid manly red.

Much did *it* talk, in *its* own *pretty* phrase,
 Of genius and of taste, of play'rs and plays ;
 Much too of writings, which *itself* had wrote,
 Of special merit, though of little note ;
 For Fate, in a strange humour, had decreed
 That what *it* wrote, none but *itself* should read ;
 Much too it chatter'd of *dramatic* laws,
 Misjudging critics, and misplac'd applause ;
 Then, with a self-complacent jutting air,
It smil'd, *it smirk'd*, *it wriggled to the chair* ;
 And, with an awkward briskness not *its* own,
 Looking around, and *perking* on the throne,
 Triumphant seem'd, when that strange savage dame,
 Known but to few, or only known by name,
 Plain Common-Sense appear'd, by Nature there
 Appointed, with plain Truth, to guard the chair.
 The pageant saw, and blasted with her frown,
 To *its* first state of nothing melted down.

Nor shall the Muse (for even there the pride
 Of this *vain nothing* shall be mortified)
 Nor shall the Muse (should Fate ordain her rhymes
 Fond, pleasing thought ! to live in after-times)

With such a trifler's name her pages blot ;
Known be the character, the *thing* forgot ;
Let it, to disappoint each future aim,
Live without sex, and die without a name !

Cold-blooded critics, by enervate sires
Scarce hammer'd out, when Nature's feeble fires
Glimmer'd their last ; whose sluggish blood, half
froze,
Creeps lab'ring through the veins ; whose heart
ne'er glows

With fancy-kindled heat ;—a servile race,
Who in mere want of fault, all merit place ;
Who blind obedience pay to ancient schools,
Bigots to Greece, and slaves to musty rules ;
With solemn consequence declar'd that none
Could judge that cause but Sophocles alone.
Dupes to their fancied excellence, the crowd,
Obsequious to the sacred dictate, bow'd.

When, from amidst the throng, a youth stood forth,
Unknown his person, not unknown his worth ;
His look bespoke applause ; alone he stood,
Alone he stemm'd the mighty critic flood.
He talk'd of ancients, as the man became
Who priz'd our own, but envied not their fame ;
With noble rev'rence spoke of Greece and Rome,
And scorn'd to tear the laurel from the tomb.

“ But more than just to other countries grown,
Must we turn base apostates to our own ?
Where do these words of Greece and Rome excel,
That England may not please the ear as well ?
What mighty magic's in the place or air,
That all perfection needs must centre there ?

In states, let strangers blindly be preferr'd;
 In state of letters, merit should be heard.
 Genius is of no country, her pure ray
 Spreads all abroad, as gen'ral as the day;
 Foe to restraint, from place to place she flies,
 And may hereafter e'en in Holland rise.
 May not (to give a pleasing fancy scope,
 And cheer a patriot heart with patriot hope)
 May not some great extensive genius raise
 The name of Britain 'bove Athenian praise;
 And, whilst brave thirst of fame his bosom warms,
 Make England great in letters as in arms?
 There may — there hath — and Shakspeare's Muse
 aspires

Beyond the reach of Greece : with natives fires
 Mounting aloft, he wings his daring flight,
 Whilst Sophocles below stands trembling at his
 height.

“ Why should we then abroad for judges roam,
 When abler judges we may find at home?
 Happy in tragic and in comic pow'rs,
 Have we not Shakspeare? — Is not Jonson ours?
 For them, your nat'ral judges, Britons, vote;
 They 'll judge like Britons, who like Britons wrote.”

He said, and conquer'd — Sense resum'd hersway,
 And disappointed pedants stalk'd away.
 Shakspeare and Jonson, with deserv'd applause,
 Joint-judges were ordain'd to try the cause.
 Meantime the stranger ev'ry voice employ'd,
 To ask or tell his name — Who is it? — *Lloyd*.

Thus, when the aged friends of Job stood mute,
 And, tamely prudent, gave up the dispute,

Elihu, with the decent warmth of youth,
Boldly stood forth the advocate of Truth ;
Confuted Falsehood, and disabled Pride,
Whilst baffled Age stood snarling at his side.

The day of trial 's fix'd, nor any fear
Lest day of trial should be put off here.
Causes but seldom for delay can call
In courts where forms are few, fees none at all.

The morning came, nor find I that the Sun,
As he on other great events hath done,
Put on a brighter robe than what he wore
To go his journey in the day before.

Full in the centre of a spacious plain,
On plan entirely new, where nothing vain,
Nothing magnificent appear'd, but Art
With decent modesty perform'd her part,
Rose a tribunal: from no other court
It borrow'd ornament, or sought support :
No juries here were pack'd to kill or clear,
No bribes were taken, nor oaths broken here ;
No gownmen, partial to a client's cause,
To their own purpose tun'd the pliant laws,
Each judge was true and steady to his trust,
As Mansfield wise, and as old Foster * just.

In the first seat, in robe of various dyes,
A noble wildness flashing from his eyes,
Sat Shakspeare. — In one hand a wand he bore,
For mighty wonders fam'd in days of yore ;
The other held a globe, which to his will
Obedient turn'd, and own'd the master's skill :

* Sir Michael Foster, one of the judges of the
King's Bench.

Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,
 And look'd through Nature at a single view:
 A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,
 And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll;
 Call'd into being scenes unknown before,
 And, passing Nature's bounds, was something more.

Next Jonson sat, in ancient learning train'd,
 His rigid judgment Fancy's flights restrain'd,
 Correctly prun'd each wild luxuriant thought,
 Mark'd out her course, nor spar'd a glorious fault.
 The book of man he read with nicest art,
 And ransack'd all the secrets of the heart;
 Exerted penetration's utmost force,
 And trac'd each passion to its proper source;
 Then strongly mark'd, in liveliest colours drew,
 And brought each foible forth to public view.
 The coxcomb felt a lash in ev'ry word,
 And fools, hung out, their brother fools deterr'd.
 His comic humour kept the world in awe,
 And Laughter frighten'd Folly more than Law.

But, hark!—The trumpet sounds, the crowd gives
 way,
 And the procession comes in just array.

Now should I, in some sweet poetic line,
 Offer up incense at Apollo's shrine;
 Invoke the Muse to quit her calm abode,
 And waken mem'ry with a sleeping ode.
 For how should mortal man, in mortal verse,
 Their titles, merits, or their names rehearse?
 But give, kind Dullness, memory and rhyme,
 We'll put off Genius till another time.

First, Order came,—with solemn step, and slow,
 In measur'd time his feet were taught to go.
 Behind, from time to time, he cast his eye,
 Lest this should quit his place, that step awry.
 Appearances to save his only care ;
 So things seem right, no matter what they are.
 In him his parents saw themselves renew'd,
 Begotten by *sir Critic* on *saint Prude*.

Then came *drum, trumpet, hautboy, fiddle, flute :*
 Next *snuffer, sweeper, shifter, soldier, mute :*
 Legions of angels all in *white* advance ;
 Furies, all *fire*, come forward in a dance ;
 Pantomime figures then are brought to view,
 Fools, hand in hand with fools, go two by two.
 Next came the treasurer of either house ;
 One with full purse, t' other with not a sous.
 Behind, a group of figures awe create,
 Set off with all th' impertinence of state ;
 By lace and feather consecrate to fame,
Expletive kings, and queens without a name.

Here Havard, all serene, in the same strains,
 Loves, hates, and rages, triumphs, and complains ;
 His easy vacant face proclaim'd a heart
 Which could not feel emotions, nor impart.
 With him came mighty Davies. On my life,
 That Davies hath a very pretty wife :—
 Statesman all over !—In plots famous grown !—
 He mouths a sentence, as curs mouth a bone.

Next Holland came.—With truly tragic stalk,
 He creeps, he flies.—A hero should not walk.
 As if with Heav'n he warr'd, his eager eyes
 Planted their batteries against the skies ;

Attitude, action, air, pause, start, sigh, groan,
 He borrow'd, and made use of as his own.
 By fortune thrown on any other stage,
 He might, *perhaps*, have pleas'd an easy age ;
 But now appears a copy, and no more,
 Of something better we have seen before.
 The actor who would build a solid fame,
 Must Imitation's servile arts disclaim ;
 Act from himself, on his own bottom stand ;
 I hate e'en Garrick thus at second-hand.

Behind came King.—Bred up in modest lore,
 Bashful and young he sought Hibernia's shore ;
 Hibernia, fam'd, 'bove ev'ry other grace,
 For matchless intrepidity of face.
 From her his features caught the gen'rous flame,
 And bid defiance to all sense of shame.
 Tutor'd by her all rivals to surpass,
 'Mongst Drury's sons he comes, and shines in Brass.

Lo Yates !—Without the least finesse of art
 He gets applause—I wish he'd get his part.
 When hot Impatience is in full career,
 How vilely “ Hark'e ! Hark'e ! ” grates the ear.
 When active Fancy from the brain is sent,
 And stands on tip-toe for some wish'd event,
 I hate those careless blunders which recall
 Suspended sense, and prove it fiction all.

In characters of low and vulgar mould,
 Where Nature's coarsest features we behold,
 Where, destitute of ev'ry decent grace,
 Unmanner'd jests are blurted in your face,
 There Yates with justice strict attention draws,
 Acts truly from himself, and gains applause.

But when to please himself, or charm his wife,
He aims at something in politer life,
When, blindly thwarting Nature's stubborn plan,
He treads the stage, by way of gentleman,
The clown, who no one touch of breeding knows,
Looks like Tom Errand dress'd in Clincher's clothes.
Fond of his dress, fond of his person grown,
Laugh'd at by all, and to himself unknown,
From side to side he struts, he smiles, he prates,
And seems to wonder what's become of Yates.

Woodward, endow'd with various tricks of face,
Great master in the science of grimace,
From Ireland ventures, fav'rite of the town,
Lur'd by the pleasing prospect of renown ;
A speaking Harlequin, made up of whim,
He twists, he twines, he tortures ev'ry limb,
Plays to the eye with a mere monkey's art,
And leaves to sense the conquest of the heart.
We laugh indeed, but on reflection's birth,
We wonder at ourselves, and curse our mirth.
His walk of parts he fatally misplac'd,
And inclination fondly took for taste ;
Hence hath the town so often seen display'd
Beau in burlesque, high life in masquerade.

But when bold wits, not such as patch up plays,
Cold and correct, in these insipid days,
Some comic character, strong featur'd, urge
To probability's extremest verge,
Where modest Judgment her decree suspends,
And for a time, nor censures, nor commends,
Where critics can't determine on the spot,
Whether it is in Nature found or not,

There Woodward safely shall his pow'rs exert,
 Nor fail of favour where he shows desert.
 Hence he in Bobadil such praises bore,
 Such worthy praises, Kitefly scarce had more.

By turns transform'd into all kind of shapes,
 Constant to none, Foote laughs, cries, struts, and
 scrapes :

Now in the centre, now in van or rear,
 The Proteus shifts, *bawd, parson, auctioneer.*
 His strokes of humour, and his bursts of sport,
 Are all contain'd in this one word, *Distort.*

Doth a man stutter, look a-squint, or halt ?
 Mimics draw humour out of Nature's fault,
 With personal defects their mirth adorn,
 And hang misfortunes out to public scorn.
 E'en I, whom Nature cast in hideous mould,
 Whom, having made, she trembled to behold,
 Beneath the load of mimicry may groan,
 And find that Nature's errours are my own.

Shadows behind of Foote and Woodward came ;
 Wilkinson this, Obrien was that name.
 Strange to relate, but wonderfully true,
 That even shadows have their shadows too !
 With not a single comic pow'r endu'd,
 The first a mere mere mimic's mimic stood ;
 The last by Nature form'd to please, who shows,
 In Jonson's Stephen, which way Genius grows ;
 Self quite put off, affects, with too much art,
 To put on Woodward in each mangled part ;
 Adopts his shrug, his wink, his stare ; nay, more,
 His voice, and croaks ; for Woodward croak'd be-
 fore.

When a dull copier simple grace neglects,
And rests his imitation in defects,
We readily forgive ; but such vile arts
Are double guilt in men of real parts.

By Nature form'd in her perversest mood,
With no one requisite of art endu'd,
Next Jackson came.—Observe that settled glare,
Which better speaks a puppet than a player :
List to that voice — did ever Discord hear
Sounds so well fitted to her untun'd ear ?
When, to enforce some very tender part,
The right-hand sleeps by instinct on the heart ;
His soul, of every other thought bereft,
Is anxious only where to place the left ;
He sobs and pants to soothe his weeping spouse,
To soothe his weeping mother, turns and bows,
Awkward, embarrass'd, stiff, without the skill
Of moving gracefully, or standing still,
One leg, as if suspicious of his brother,
Desirous seems to run away from t' other.

Some errors, handed down from age to age,
Plead custom's force, and still possess the stage.
That 's vile — Should we a parent's faults adore,
And err, because our fathers err'd before :
If, inattentive to the author's mind,
Some actors made the jest they could not find ;
If by low tricks they marr'd fair Nature's mien,
And blurr'd the graces of the simple scene ;
Shall we, if reason rightly is employ'd,
Not see their faults, or seeing not avoid ?
When Falstaff stands detected in a lie,
Why, without meaning, rolls Love's glassy eye ?

Why ? — 'There 's no cause — at least no cause we
know —

It was the fashion twenty years ago.
Fashion, a word which knaves and fools may use
Their knavery and folly to excuse.
To copy beauties, forfeits all pretence
To fame — to copy faults, is want of sense.

Yet (though in some particulars he fails,
Some few particulars, where mode prevails)
If in these hallow'd times, when sober, sad,
All gentlemen are melancholy mad,
When 'tis not deem'd so great a crime by half
To violate a vestal, as to laugh,
Rude Mirth may hope presumptuous to engage
An act of toleration for the stage,
And courtiers will, like reasonable creatures,
Suspend vain fashion, and unscrew their features,
Old Falstaff, play'd by Love, shall please once more,
And humour set the audience in a roar.

Actors I 've seen, and of no vulgar name,
Who, being from one part possess'd of fame,
Whether they are to laugh, cry, whine, or bawl,
Still introduce that fav'rite part in all.
Here, Love, be cautious — ne'er be thou betray'd
To call in that wag Falstaff's dangerous aid ;
Like Goths of old, howe'er he seems a friend,
He 'll seize that throne, you wish him to defend.
In a peculiar mould by Humour cast,
For Falstaff fram'd — Himself, the first and last,—
He stands aloof from all — maintains his state,
And scorns, like *Scotsmen*, to assimilate.

Vain all disguise — too plain we see the trick,
 Though the Knight wears the weeds of Dominic.
 And Boniface, disgrac'd, betrays the smack,
 In Anno Domini, of Falstaff's sack. [ing slow,

Arms cross'd, brows bent, eyes fix'd, feet march-
 A band of malecontents with spleen o'erflow ;
 Wrapt in Conceit's impenetrable fog,
 Which Pride, like Phœbus, draws from ev'ry bog,
 They curse the managers, and curse the town,
 Whose partial favour keeps such merit down.

But if some man, more hardy than the rest,
 Should dare attack these *gnallings* in their nest ;
 At once they rise with impotence of rage,
 Whet their small stings, and buzz about the stage.
 " 'Tis breach of privilege ! — Shall any dare
 To arm satiric truth against a player ?
 Prescriptive rights we plead time out of mind ;
 Actors, unlash'd themselves, may lash mankind."

What ! shall Opinion then, of nature free
 And lib'ral as the vagrant air, agree
 To rust in chains like these, impos'd by things
 Which, less than nothing, ape the pride of kings ?
 No — though half-poets with half-players join
 To curse the freedom of each honest line ;
 Though rage and malice dim their faded cheek ;
 What the Muse freely thinks, she 'll freely speak.
 With just disdain of ev'ry paltry sneer,
 Stranger alike to flattery and fear,
 In purpose fix'd, and to herself a rule,
 Public contempt shall wait the public fool.

Austin would always glisten in French silks,
 Ackman would Norris be, and Packer Wilks.

For who, like Ackman, can with humour please ?
Who can, like Packer, charm with sprightly ease ?
Higher than all the rest, see Bransby strut :
A mighty Gulliver in Lilliput !
Ludicrous Nature ! which at once could show
A man so very high, so very low.

If I forget thee, Blakes, or if I say
Aught hurtful, may I never see thee play.
Let critics, with a supercilious air,
Decry thy various merit, and declare
Frenchman is still at top ; — but scorn that rage
Which, in attacking thee, attacks the age.
French follies, universally embrac'd,
At once provoke our mirth, and form our taste.

Long, from a nation ever hardly us'd,
At random censur'd, wantonly abus'd,
Have Britons drawn their sport, with partial view
Form'd gen'ral notions from the rascal few ;
Condemn'd a people, as for vices known,
Which, from their country banish'd, seek our own.
At length, howe'er, the slavish chain is broke,
And Sense, awaken'd, scorns her ancient yoke :
Taught by thee, Moody, we now learn to raise
Mirth from their foibles ; from their virtues, praise.

Next came the legion, which our *Summer Bayes*,
From alleys, here and there, contriv'd to raise,
Flush'd with vast hopes, and certain to succeed
With wits who cannot write, and scarce can read.
Vet'rans no more support the rotten cause,
No more from Elliot's worth they reap applause ;
Each on himself determines to rely,
Be Yates disbanded, and let Elliot fly,

Never did play'rs so well an author fit,
To Nature dead, and foes declar'd to Wit.
So loud each tongue, so empty was each head,
So much they talk'd, so very little said,
So wondrous dull, and yet so wondrous vain,
At once so willing, and unfit to reign,
That Reason swore, nor would the oath recall,
Their mighty master's soul inform'd them all.

As one with various disappointments sad,
Whom Dullness only kept from being mad,
Apart from all the rest great Murphy came —
Common to fools and wits, the rage of fame.
What though the sons of Nonsense hail him **SIRE**,
AUDITOR, AUTHOR, MANAGER, and SQUIRE,
His restless soul's ambition stops not there,
To make his triumphs perfect, dub him **PLAYER**.

In person tall, a figure form'd to please ;
If symmetry could charm, depriv'd of ease ;
When motionless he stands, we all approve ;
What pity 'tis the *thing* was made to move.

His voice, in one dull, deep, unvaried sound,
Seems to break forth from caverns under ground.
From hollow chest the low sepulchral note
Unwilling heaves, and struggles in his throat.

Could authors butcher'd give an actor grace,
All must to him resign the foremost place.
When he attempts, in some one fav'rite part,
To ape the feelings of a manly heart,
His honest features the disguise defy,
And his face loudly gives his tongue the lie.

Still in extremes, he knows no happy mean,
Or raving mad, or stupidly serene.

In cold-wrought scenes the lifeless actor flags,
In passion, tears the passion into rags.
Can none remember? — Yes — I know all must —
When in the Moor he ground his teeth to dust,
When o'er the stage he Folly's standard bore,
Whilst Common-Sense stood trembling at the door.

How few are found with real talents bless'd,
Fewer with Nature's gifts contented rest.
Man from his sphere eccentric starts astray;
All hunt for fame; but most mistake the way.
Bred at St. Omer's to the shuffling trade,
The hopeful youth a Jesuit might have made,
With various readings stor'd his empty skull,
Learn'd without sense, and venerably dull;
Or, at some banker's desk, like many more,
Content to tell that two and two make four,
His name had stood in CITY ANNALS fair,
And *prudent* Dullness mark'd him for a mayor.

What then could tempt thee, in a critic age,
Such blooming hopes to forfeit on a stage?
Could it be worth thy wondrous waste of pains
To publish to the world thy lack of brains?
Or might not Reason e'en to thee have shown
Thy greatest praise had been to live *unknown*?
Yet let not vanity, like thine, despair:
Fortune makes Folly her peculiar care.

A vacant throne high plac'd in Smithfield view,
To sacred Dullness and her *first-born* due,
Thither with haste in happy hour repair,
Thy birthright claim, nor fear a rival there.
Shuter himself shall own thy juster claim,
And venal Ledgers puff their Murphy's name,

Whilst Vaughan * or Dapper, call him which you will,

Shall blow the trumpet, and give out the bill.

There rule secure, from critics and from sense,
Nor once shall Genius rise to give offence ;
Eternal peace shall bless the happy shore,
And little factions break thy rest no more.

From Covent Garden crowds promiscuous go,
Whom the Muse knows not, nor desires to know.
Vet'rans they seem'd, but knew of arms no more
Than if, till that time, arms they never bore :
Like Westminster militia train'd to fight,
They scarcely knew the left hand from the right.
Asham'd among such troops to show the head,
Their chiefs were scatter'd, and their heroes fled.

Sparks at his glass sat comfortably down
To sep'rate frown from smile, and smile from frown ;
Smith, the genteel, the airy, and the smart,
Smith was just gone to school to say his part ;
Ross (a misfortune which we often meet)
Was fast asleep at dear Statira's feet ;
Statira, with her hero to agree,
Stood on her feet as fast asleep as he ;
Macklin, who largely deals in half-form'd sounds,
Who wantonly transgresses Nature's bounds,
Whose acting 's hard, affected, and constrain'd,
Whose features, as each other they disdain'd,
At variance set, inflexible and coarse,
Ne'er know the workings of united force,

* A gentleman who published, at this juncture, a poem entitled *The Retort*.

Ne'er kindly soften to each other's aid,
 Nor show the mingled pow'rs of light and shade,
 No longer for a thankless stage concern'd,
 To worthier thoughts his mighty genius turn'd,
 Harangu'd, gave lectures, made each simple elf
 Almost as good a speaker as himself;
 Whilst the whole town, mad with mistaken zeal,
 An awkward rage for elocution feel;
 Dull cits and grave divines his praise proclaim,
 And join with Sheridan's their Macklin's name;
 Shuter, who never car'd a single pin
 Whether he left out nonsense, or put in,
 Who aim'd at wit, though, levell'd in the dark,
 The random arrow seldom hit the mark,
 At Islington, all by the placid stream
 Where city swains in lap of Dullness dream,
 Where, quiet as her strains their strains *do* flow,
 That all the patron by the bards may know,
 Secret as night, with Rolt's experienc'd aid,
 The plan of future operations laid,
 Projected schemes the summer months to cheer,
 And spin out happy folly through the year.

But think not, though these dastard chiefs are fled,
 That Covent Garden troops shall want a head:
 Harlequin comes their chief! — See from afar,
 The hero seated in fantastic car!
 Wedded to *Novelty*, his only arms
 Are wooden swords, wands, talismans, and charms;
 On one side Folly sits, by some call'd Fun,
 And on the other, his arch-patron, Lun.
 Behind, for liberty a-thirst in vain,
 Sense, helpless captive, drags the galling chain.

Six rude mis-shapen beasts the chariot draw,
Whom Reason loaths, and Nature never saw ;
Monsters, with tails of ice, and heads of fire ;
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.
Each was bestrode by full as monstrous wight,
Giant, Dwarf, Genius, Elf, Hermaphrodite.
The town, as usual, met him in full cry ;
The town, as usual, knew no reason why.
But Fashion so directs, and moderns raise
On Fashion's mouldering base their transient praise.

Next, to the field a band of females draw
Their force ; for Britain owns no Salique law :
Just to their worth, we female rights admit,
Nor bar their claim to empire or to wit.

First, giggling, plotting chamber-maids arrive,
Hoydens and romps, led on by gen'ral Clive.
In spite of outward blemishes, she shone
For humour fam'd, and humour all her own.
Easy, as if at home, the stage she trod,
Nor sought the critic's praise, nor fear'd his rod.
Original in spirit and in ease,
She pleas'd by hiding all attempts to please.
No comic actress ever yet could raise,
On Humour's base, more merit or more praise.

With all the native vigour of sixteen,
Among the merry troop conspicuous seen,
See lively Pope advance in *jig* and *trip*,
Corinna, Cherry, Honeycomb, and Snip.
Not without art, but yet to Nature true,
She charms the town with humour just, yet new.
Cheer'd by her promise, we the less deplore
The fatal time when Clive shall be no more.

Lo! Vincent comes — with simple grace array'd,
She laughs at paltry arts, and scorns parade.
Nature through her is by reflection shown,
Whilst Gay once more knows Polly for his own.

Talk not to me of diffidence and fear —
I see it all, but must forgive it here.
Defects like these which *modest* terrors cause,
From impudence itself extort applause.
Candour and Reason still take Virtue's part;
We love e'en foibles in so good a heart.

Let Tommy Arne, with usual pomp of style,
Whose chief, whose only merit 's to compile,
Who, meanly pilfering here and there a bit,
Deals music out as Murphy deals out wit,
Publish proposals, laws for taste prescribe,
And chant the praise of an Italian tribe;
Let him reverse kind Nature's first decrees,
And teach e'en Brent a method not to please;
But never shall a truly British age
Bear a vile race of eunuchs on the stage.
The boasted work 's call'd national in vain,
If one Italian voice pollutes the strain.
Where tyrants rule, and slaves with joy obey,
Let slavish minstrels pour th' enervate lay;
To Britons far more noble pleasures spring,
In native notes whilst Beard and Vincent sing.

Might figure give a title unto fame,
What rival should with Yates dispute her claim?
But justice may not partial trophies raise,
Nor sink the actress in the woman's praise.
Still hand in hand her words and actions go,
And the heart feels more than the features show :

For, through the regions of that beauteous face,
We no variety of passions trace ;
Dead to the soft emotions of the heart,
No kindred softness can those eyes impart ;
The brow, still fix'd in Sorrow's sullen frame,
Void of distinction, marks all parts the same.

What 's a fine person, or a beauteous face,
Unless deportment gives them decent grace ?
Bless'd with all other requisites to please,
Some want the striking elegance of ease ;
The curious eye their awkward movement tires ;
They seem like puppets led about by wires.
Others, like statues, in one posture still,
Give great ideas of the workman's skill ;
Wond'ring, his art we praise the more we view,
And only grieve he gave not motion too.
Weak of themselves are what we beauties call,
It is the manner which gives strength to all.
This teaches every beauty to unite,
And brings them forward in the noblest light.
Happy in this, behold, amidst the throng,
With transient gleam of grace, Hart sweeps along.

If all the wonders of external grace,
A person finely turn'd, a mould of face,
Where, union rare, Expression's lively force
With Beauty's softest magic holds discourse,
Attract the eye ; if feelings, void of art,
Rouse the quick passions, and inflame the heart ;
If music, sweetly breathing from the tongue,
Captives the ear, Bride must not pass unsung.

When fear, which rank ill-nature terms conceit,
By time and custom conquer'd, shall retreat ;

Shall kindly drop, then Bride shall make her way,
And merit find a passage to the day ;
Brought into action, she at once shall raise
Her own renown, and justify our praise.

When poor Alicia's madd'ning brains are rack'd,
And strongly imag'd griefs her mind distract :
Struck with her grief, I catch the madness too !
My brain turns round, the headless trunk I view !
The roof cracks, shakes, and falls ! — New horrors
rise,

Nobly disdainful of each slavish art,
She makes her first attack upon the heart :
Pleas'd with the summons, it receives her laws,
And all is silence, sympathy, applause.

But when, by fond ambition drawn aside,
Giddy with praise, and puff'd with female pride,
She quits the tragic scene, and, in pretence
To comic merit, breaks down Nature's fence;
I scarcely can believe my ears or eyes,
Or find out Cibber through the dark disguise.

Pritchard, by Nature for the stage design'd,
In person graceful, and in sense refin'd;
Her art as much as Nature's friend became,
Her voice as free from blemish as her fame,
Who knows so well in majesty to please,
Attemper'd with the graceful charms of ease?

When Congreve's favour'd pantomime to grace,
She comes a captive queen of Moorish race;
When Love, Hate, Jealousy, Despair, and Rage,
With wildest tumults in her breast engage;
Still equal to herself is Zara seen;
Her passions are the passions of a queen.

When she to murder whets the timorous Thane,
I feel ambition rush through ev'ry vein;
Persuasion hangs upon her daring tongue,
My heart grows flint, and ev'ry nerve's new-strung.

In comedy — "Nay there," cries Critic, "hold,
Pritchard's for comedy too fat and old.
Who can, with patience, bear the grey coquette,
Or force a laugh with over-grown Juliet?
Her speech, look, action, humour, all are just;
But then, her age and figure give disgust."

Are foibles then, and graces of the mind,
In real life, to size, or age confin'd?
Do spirits flow, and is good-breeding plac'd
In any set circumference of waist?

As we grow old, doth affectation cease,
Or gives not age new vigour to caprice?
If in originals these things appear,
Why should we bar them in the copy here?
The nice punctilio-mongers of this age,
The grand minute reformers of the stage,
Slaves to propriety of ev'ry kind,
Some standard-measure for each part should find,
Which when the best of actors shall exceed,
Let it devolve to one of smaller breed.
All actors too upon the back should bear
Certificate of birth,—time, when ;—place, where.
For how can critics rightly fix their worth,
Unless they know the minute of their birth?
An audience too, deceiv'd, may find too late
That they have clapp'd an actor out of date.

Figure, I own, at first may give offence,
And harshly strike the eye's too curious sense ;
But when perfections of the mind break forth,
Humour's chaste sallies, judgment's solid worth ;
When the pure genuine flame, by Nature taught,
Springs into sense, and ev'ry action's thought ;
Before such merit all objections fly ;
Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's six feet high.

Oft have I, Pritchard, seen thy wondrous skill,
Confess'd thee great, but find thee greater still.
That worth, which shone in scatter'd rays before,
Collected now, breaks forth with double pow'r.
The Jealous Wife ! on that thy trophies raise,
Inferior only to the author's praise.

From Dublin, fam'd in legends of romance
For mighty magic of enchanted lance,

With which her heroes arm'd victorious prove,
 And like a flood rush o'er the land of Love,
 Mossop and Barry came — names ne'er design'd
 By Fate in the same sentence to be join'd.
 Rais'd by the breath of popular acclaim,
 They mounted to the pinnacle of Fame ;
 There the weak brain, made giddy with the height,
 Spurr'd on the rival chiefs to mortal fight.
 Thus sportive boys, around some bason's brim,
 Behold the pipe-drawn bladders circling swim :
 But if from lungs more potent, there arise
 Two bubbles of a more than common size.
 Eager for honour they for fight prepare,
 Bubble meets bubble, and both sink to air.

Mossop, attach'd to military plan,
 Still kept his eye fix'd on his right-hand man.
 Whilst the mouth measures words with seeming
 skill,
 The right-hand labours, and the left lies still ;
 For he resolv'd on scripture-grounds to go,
 What the right doth, the left-hand shall not know.
 With studied impropriety of speech,
 He soars beyond the hackney critic's reach ;
 To epithets allots emphatic state,
 Whilst principals, ungrac'd, like lacquies wait ;
 In ways first trodden by himself excels,
 And stands alone in indeclinables ;
 Conjunction, preposition, adverb join
 To stamp new vigour on the nervous line :
 In monosyllables his thunders roll,
 HE, SHE, IT, AND, WE, YE, THEY, fright the soul.
 In person taller than the common size,
 Behold where Barry draws admiring eyes !

When lab'ring passions, in his bosom pent,
Convulsive rage, and struggling heave for vent ;
Spectators, with imagin'd terrors warm,
Anxious expect the bursting of the storm :
But, all unfit in such a pile to dwell,
His voice comes forth, like Echo from her cell ;
To swell the tempest needful aid denies,
And all a-down the stage in feeble murmur dies.

What man, like Barry, with such pains can err
In elocution, action, character ?

What man could give, if Barry was not here,
Such well-applauded tenderness to Lear ?
Who else can speak so very, very fine,
That sense may kindly end with ev'ry line ?

Some dozen lines before the ghost is there,
Behold him for the solemn scene prepare.
See how he frames his eyes, poises each limb,
Puts the whole body into proper trim. —
From whence we learn, with no great stretch of art,
Five lines hence comes a ghost, and ha ! a start.

When he appears most perfect, still we find
Something which jars upon, and hurts the mind.
Whatever lights upon a part are thrown,
We see too plainly they are not his own.
No flame from Nature ever yet he caught ;
Nor knew a feeling which he was not taught ;
He rais'd his trophies on the base of art,
And conn'd his passions, as he conn'd his part.

Quin, from afar, lur'd by the scent of fame,
A stage Leviathan, put in his claim,
Pupil of Betterton and Booth. Alone,
Sullen he walk'd, and deem'd the chair his own.

For how should moderns, mushrooms of the day,
 Who ne'er those masters knew, know how to play?
 Grey-bearded vet'rans, who, with partial tongue,
 Extol the times when they themselves were young,
 Who, having lost all relish for the stage,
 See not their own defects, but lash the age,
 Receiv'd with joyful murmurs of applause,
 Their darling chief, and lin'd his fav'rite cause.

Far be it from the candid Muse to tread
 Insulting o'er the ashes of the dead,
 But, just to living merit, she maintains,
 And dares the test, whilst Garrick's genius reigns;
 Ancients in vain endeavour to excel,
 Happily prais'd, if they could act as well.
 But though prescription's force we disallow,
 Nor to antiquity submissive bow;
 Though we deny imaginary grace,
 Founded on accidents of time and place;
 Yet real worth of ev'ry growth shall bear
 Due praise, nor must we, Quin, forget thee there.

His words bore sterling weight, nervous and
 strong,
 In manly tides of sense they roll'd along.
 Happy in art, he chiefly had pretence
 To keep up numbers, yet not forfeit sense.
 No actor ever greater heights could reach
 In all the labour'd artifice of speech.

Speech! Is that all? — And shall an actor found
 A universal fame on partial ground?
 Parrots themselves speak properly by rote,
 And, in six months, my dog shall howl by note.
 I laugh at those, who, when the stage they tread,
 Neglect the heart, to compliment the head;

With strict propriety their cares confin'd
To weigh out words, while passion halts behind.
To syllable-dissectors they appeal,
Allow them accent, cadence, — fools may feel ;
But, spite of all the criticising elves,
Those who would make us feel, must feel themselves.

His eyes, in gloomy socket taught to roll,
Proclaim'd the sullen habit of his soul.
Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
Too proud for tenderness, too dull for rage.
When Hector's lovely widow shines in tears,
Or Rowe's gay rake dependant virtue jeers,
With the same cast of features he is seen
To chide the libertine, and court the queen.
From the tame scene, which without passion flows,
With just desert his reputation rose ;
Nor less he pleas'd, when, on some surly plan,
He was, at once, the actor and the man.

In Brute he shone unequall'd : all agree
Garrick's not half so great a brute as he.
When Cato's labour'd scenes are brought to view,
With equal praise the actor labour'd too ;
For still you 'll find, trace passions to their root,
Small diff'rence 'twixt the stoic and the brute.
In fancied scenes, as in life's real plan,
He could not, for a moment, sink the man.
In whate'er cast his character was laid,
Self still, like oil, upon the surface play'd.
Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in :
Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff, — still 't was Quin.

Next follows Sheridan — a doubtful name,
As yet unsettled in the rank of Fame.

This, fondly lavish in his praises grown,
Gives him all merit; that allows him none.
Between them both we 'll steer the middle course,
Nor, loving praise, rob Judgment of her force.

Just his conceptions, natural and great :
His feelings strong, his words enforc'd with weight.
Was speech-fam'd Quin himself to hear him speak,
Envy would drive the colour from his cheek :
But step-dame Nature, niggard of her grace,
Deny'd the social pow'rs of voice and face.
Fix'd in one frame of features, glare of eye,
Passions, like chaos, in confusion lie :
In vain the wonders of his skill are try'd
To form distinctions Nature hath deny'd.
His voice no touch of harmony admits,
Irregularly deep and shrill by fits :
The two extremes appear like man and wife,
Coupled together for the sake of strife.

His action 's always strong, but sometimes such,
That candour must declare he acts too much.
Why must impatience fall three paces back ?
Why paces three return to the attack ?
Why is the right leg too forbid to stir,
Unless in motion semicircular ?
Why must the hero with the Nailor vie,
And hurl the close-clench'd fist at nose or eye ?
In royal John, with Philip angry grown,
I thought he would have knock'd poor Davies
down.

Inhuman tyrant ! was it not a shame,
To fright a king so harmless and so tame ?
But, spite of all defects, his glories rise ;
And Art, by Judgment form'd, with Nature vies :

Behold him sound the depth of Hubert's soul,
 Whilst in his own contending passions roll ;
 View the whole scene, with critic judgment scan,
 And then deny him merit if you can.
 Where he falls short, 't is Nature's fault alone ;
 Where he succeeds, the merit 's all his own.

Last Garrick came. — Behind him throng a train
 Of snarling critics, ignorant as vain.

One finds out, — “ He 's of stature somewhat
 low —

Your hero always should be tall, you know. —
 True nat'ral greatness all consists in height.”
 Produce your voucher, Critic. — “ Sergeant Kite.”

Another can't forgive the paltry arts
 By which he makes his way to shallow hearts ;
 Mere pieces of finesse, traps for applause —
 “ Avaunt, unnat'ral start, affected pause.”

For me, by Nature form'd to judge with phlegm,
 I can't acquit by wholesale, nor condemn.
 The best things carried to excess are wrong :
 The start may be too frequent, pause too long ;
 But, only us'd in proper time and place,
 Severest judgment must allow them grace.

If bunglers, form'd on Imitation's plan,
 Just in the way that monkies mimic man,
 Their copied scene with mangled arts disgrace,
 And pause and start with the same vacant face ;
 We join the critic laugh ; those tricks we scorn,
 Which spoil the scenes they mean them to adorn.
 But when, from Nature's pure and genuine source,
 These strokes of acting flow with gen'rous force,

When in the features all the soul 's pourtray'd,
And passions, such as Garrick's, are display'd,
To me they seem from quickest feelings caught :
Each start is Nature ; and each pause is Thought.

When Reason yields to Passion's wild alarms,
And the whole state of man is up in arms ;
What but a critic could condemn the play'r,
For pausing here, when Cool-Sense pauses there ?
Whilst, working from the heart, the fire I trace,
And mark it strongly flaming to the face ;
Whilst, in each sound, I hear the very man ;
I can't catch words, and pity those who can.

Let wits, like spiders, from the tortur'd brain,
Fine-draw the critic-web with curious pain :
The gods, — a kindness I with thanks must pay, —
Have form'd me of a coarser kind of clay ;
Not stung with envy, nor with pain diseas'd,
A poor dull creature, still with Nature pleas'd ;
Hence to thy praises, Garrick, I agree,
And, pleas'd with Nature, must be pleas'd with thee.

Now I might tell, how silence reign'd throughout,
And deep attention hush'd the rabble rout :
How ev'ry claimant, tortur'd with desire,
Was pale as ashes, or as red as fire :
But, loose to fame, the Muse more simply acts,
Rejects all flourish, and relates mere facts.

The judges, as the several parties came, [claim,
With temper heard, with judgment weigh'd each
And, in their sentence happily agreed,
In name of both, great Shakspeare thus decreed.

“ If manly sense ; if Nature link'd with Art ;
If thorough knowledge of the human heart ;

If pow'rs of acting vast and unconfin'd;
If fewest faults with greatest beauties join'd;
If strong expression, and strange pow'rs which lie
Within the magic circle of the eye;
If feelings which few hearts, like his, can know,
And which no face so well as his can show,
Deserve the pref'rence — Garrick, take the chair;
Nor quit it — till thou place an equal there."

EDWARD YOUNG.

EDWARD YOUNG, a poet of considerable celebrity, was the only son of Dr. Edward Young, fellow of Winchester College, and rector of Upham, Hampshire. He was born at his father's living, in 1684, and was educated at Winchester school, whence he was removed to New College, and afterwards to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. By the favour of Archbishop Tenison he obtained a law-fellowship at All-Souls. At this time his chief pursuit appears to have been poetry; and it is little to his credit, with respect to his choice of patrons, that he has sought them through all the political changes of the time. Tragedy was one of his favourite pursuits, in which his "Revenge," dedicated in 1721 to the Duke of Wharton, was regarded as his principal effort. Many other performances, however, took their turn, of which the most noted at this time were his "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job;" and "The Love of Fame, or the Universal Passion."

Young, now in his forty-fourth year, having given up his prospects as a layman, took orders, and was nominated one of the Royal Chaplains.

He published some prose works as the fruits of his new profession, of which were, "The True Estimate of Human Life," representing only its dark side; and "An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government," a sermon, well suited to a court chaplain. In 1730 he was presented, by his college, to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire; and in the following year he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, widow of Colonel Lee, and daughter of the Earl of Lichfield. This lady he lost in 1741, after she had borne him one son. Other affecting family losses occurred about that period, and aggravated his disposition to melancholy; and it was in this year that he commenced his famous poem, the "Night Thoughts." This production is truly original in design and execution: it imitates none, and has no imitators. Its spirit is, indeed, gloomy and severe, and its theology awful and overwhelming. It seems designed to pluck up by the roots every consolation for human evils, except that founded on the scheme of Christianity which the writer adopted; yet it presents reflections which are inculcated with a force of language, and sublimity of imagination, almost unparalleled. It abounds with the faults characteristic of the writer, and is spun out to a tedious length, that of nine books; but if not often read through, it will never sink into neglect. It was evidently the favourite work of the author, who ever after wished to be known as the composer of the "Night Thoughts." The numerous editions of the work sufficiently

prove the hold which it has taken of the public mind.

The lyric attempts of Young were singularly unfortunate, not one of his pieces of that class having a claim for perusal; and, indeed, many of his other poetical writings display inequalities, and defects of taste and judgment, very extraordinary for a writer of his rank. In an edition of his works, published during his life, in four vols. 8vo., he himself excluded several compositions, which he thought of inferior merit, and expunged many dedications, of which he was doubtless ashamed. A letter to him, from Archbishop Secker, proves, however, that at a late period of life he had not ceased to solicit preferment. He latterly fell under domestic sway, and was entirely subdued to the controul of a housekeeper. Young continued to exist till April, 1765, when he expired in his 84th year.

A PARAPHRASE

ON PART OF

THE BOOK OF JOB.

THREE happy Job long liv'd in regal state,
 Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great ;
 Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,
 Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.
 At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,
 And ills on ills succeed ! a dreadful train !
 What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
 The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,
 And spotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er
 So thick with pains, they wanted room for more !
 A change so sad, what mortal here could bear ?
 Exhausted woe had left him nought to fear ;
 But gave him all to grief. Low earth he press'd,
 Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
 His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,
 Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd ;
 In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,
 And seven long days in solemn silence spent !
 A debt of reverence to distress so great !
 Then Job contain'd no more ; but curs'd his fate.
 His day of birth, its inauspicious light,
 He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,
 And blotted from the year ; nor fears to crave
 Death, instant death ; impatient for the grave,
 That seat of peace, that mansion of repose,
 Where rest and mortals are no longer foes ;

Where counsellors are hush'd, and mighty kings
(Oh happy turn !) no more are wretched things.

His words were daring, and displeas'd his friends ;
His conduct they reprove, and he defends ;
And now they kindled into warm debate,
And sentiments oppos'd with equal heat ;
Fix'd in opinion, both refuse to yield,
And summon all their reason to the field :
So high at length their arguments were wrought,
They reach'd the last extent of human thought :
A pause ensued — When, lo ! Heaven interpos'd,
And awefully the long contention clos'd.
Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,
A sudden whirlwind blacken'd all the skies :
(They saw, and trembled !) from the darkness broke
A dreadful voice, and thus th' Almighty spoke :

“ Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain
Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign ;
Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,
And tells the World's Creator what is just ?
Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,
Face my demand, and give it a reply : —
Where didst thou dwell at Nature's early birth ?
Who laid foundations for the spacious *Earth* ?
Who on its surface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine ?
Who fix'd the corner-stone ? What hand, declare,
Hung it on nought, and fasten'd it on air ;
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,
When Heaven's high arch with loud hosannahs
rung,

When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,
And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound ?

Earth's numerous *kingdoms*, hast thou view'd them
all ?

And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball ?
Who heav'd the *mountain*, which sublimely stands,
And casts its shadow into distant lands ?

“ Who, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the *deep*,
Can that wide world in due subjection keep ?
I broke the globe, I scoop'd its hollow side,
And did a bason for the floods provide ;
I chain'd them with my word ; the boiling sea,
Work'd up in tempests, hears my great decree ;
' Thus far, thy floating tide shall be convey'd ;
And here, O main, be thy proud billows stay'd.' ”

“ Hast thou explor'd the *secrets* of the deep,
Where, shut from use, unnumber'd treasures sleep ?
Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea ?
Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head ?

“ Hath the cleft *centre* open'd wide to thee ?
Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see ?
E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
To the black portal through th' incumbent shade ?
Deep are those shades ; but shades still deeper hide
My counsels from the ken of human pride. [dome?

“ Where dwells the *light* ? In what refulgent
And where has *darkness* made her dismal home ?
Thou know'st, no doubt, since thy large heart is
fraught

With ripen'd wisdom, through long ages brought ;
Since Nature was call'd forth when thou wast by,
And into being rose beneath thine eye !

" *Are mists* begotten? Who their father knew?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew?
To bind the stream by night, what hand can boast,
Or whiten morning with the hoary *frost*?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the sea, and turns it into stone:
A sudden desert spreads o'er realms defac'd,
And lays one half of the creation waste?

" Thou know'st me not; thy blindness cannot
see

How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Canst thou in *whirlwinds* mount aloft? Canst thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow?
And, when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night?

" Who launch'd the *clouds* in air, and bid them
roll

Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?
Who, in rough deserts far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?
There blooms the rose, where human face ne'er shone,
And spreads its beauties to the Sun alone.

" To check the shower, who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of th' exhausted sky,
When Earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her russet plains;
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And Earth and Heaven are fill'd with rich perfume?

“ Hast thou e’er scal’d my wintry skies, and seen
 Of *hail* and *snows* my northern magazine ?
 These the dread treasures of mine anger are,
 My funds of vengeance for the day of war,
 When clouds rain death, and storms at my command

Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.

“ Who taught the rapid *winds* to fly so fast,
 Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast ?
 Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour ?
 Who strikes through Nature with the solemn roar
 Of dreadful *thunder*, points it where to fall,
 And in fierce *lightning* wraps the flying ball ?
 Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
 Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

“ Who drew the *comet* out to such a size,
 And pour’d his flaming train o’er half the skies ?
 Did thy resentment hang him out ? Does he
 Glare on the nation, and denounce, from thee ?

“ Who on low Earth can moderate the rein,
 That guides the *stars* along th’ ethereal plain ?
 Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
 Their lustre brighten, and supply their force ?
 Canst thou the skies’ benevolence restrain,
 And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain ?
 Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
 Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year ?
 Bid Mazzaroth his destin’d station know,
 And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow ?
 Mine is the *night*, with all her stars ; I pour
 Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store. [born,

“ Dost thou pronounce where day-light shall be
 And draw the purple curtain of the morn ;

Awake the *Sun*, and bid him come away,
And glad *thy* world with his obsequious ray?
Hast thou, enthron'd in flaming glory, driven
Triumphant round the spacious ring of Heaven?
That pomp of light, what hand so far displays
That distant Earth lies basking in the blaze?

“ Who did the *soul* with her rich powers invest,
And light up reason in the human breast?
To shine, with fresh increase of lustre bright,
When stars and Sun are set in endless night?
To these my various questions make reply.”
Th' Almighty spoke; and, speaking, shook the sky.

What then, Chaldaean sire, was thy surprise!
Thus thou, with trembling heart and down-cast
eyes: —

“ Once and again, which I in groans deplore,
My tongue has err'd; but shall presume no more.
My voice is in eternal silence bound,
And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground.”

He ceas'd: when, lo, again th' Almighty spoke;
The same dread voice from the black whirlwind
broke.

“ Can that arm measure with an arm divine?
And canst thou thunder with a voice like mine?
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,
When, mad with tempests, all the billows rise
In all their rage, and dash the distant skies?

“ Come forth, in beauty's excellence array'd;
And be the grandeur of thy power display'd;
Put on omnipotence, and, frowning, make
The spacious round of the creation shake;

Dispatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
Triumphant vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
And crumble them to dust. When this is done,
I grant thy safety lodg'd in thee alone;
Of thee thou art, and mayst undaunted stand
Behind the buckler of thine own right-hand.

“ Fond man ! the vision of a moment made !
Dream of a dream ! and shadow of a shade !
What worlds hast thou produc'd, what creatures
fram'd ;

What insects cherish'd, that thy God is blam'd ?
When pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood
Loud calls on God, importunate for food :
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
And stills the clamour of the craving nest ?

“ Who in the stupid ostrich has subdued
A parent's care, and fond inquietude ?
While far she flies, her scatter'd eggs are found,
Without an owner, on the sandy ground ;
Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
And borrow life from an indulgent sky :
Adopted by the Sun, in blaze of day,
They ripen under his prolific ray.
Unmindful she, that some unhappy tread,
May crush her young in their neglected bed.
What time she skims along the field with speed,
She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed.

“ How rich the peacock ! what bright glories run
From plume to plume, and vary in the Sun !
He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day ;

With conscious state the spacious round displays,
And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

“ Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
Perpetual summer, and a change of skies ?
When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,
Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind ;
The Sun returning, she returns again,
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.

“ Though strong the hawk, though practis’d well
to fly,

An eagle drops her in a lower sky ;
An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
She seeks the Sun in her unwearied flight :
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
So high in air, and set her on the clift,
Where far above *thy* world she dwells alone,
And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own ;
Thence wide o’er Nature takes her dread survey,
And with a glance predestinates her prey ?
She feasts her young with blood ; and, hovering o’er
Th’ unslaughter’d host, enjoys the *promis’d* gore.

“ Know’st thou how many moons, by me assign’d,
Roll o’er the mountain goat, and forest hind,
While pregnant they a mother’s load sustain ?
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed ;
Walk unsustain’d, and unassisted feed ;
They live at once ; forsake the dam’s warm side ;
Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide ;
Bound o’er the lawn, or seek the distant glade ;
And find a home in each delightful shade.

“ Will the tall reem, which knows no Lord but
me,

Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee ?
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
Break the stiff clod, and o'er thy furrow smoke ?
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care ;
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year ;
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
And cast his load among thy gather'd stores.

“ Didst thou from service the wild ass discharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large,
Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
And lose himself in his unbounded home ?
By Nature's hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains spread ;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He sees in distant smoke the city throng ;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother'd train,
The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

“ Survey the warlike horse ! didst thou invest
With thunder his robust distended chest ?
No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays ;
'T is dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze ;
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
And triumphs in the fullness of his might ;
High rais'd he snuffs the battle from afar,
And burns to plunge amid the raging war ;
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
How does his firm, his rising heart advance
Full on the brandish'd sword, and shaken lance :

While his fix'd eye-balls meet the dazzling shield,
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field !
He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side ;
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast
Till death ; and when he groans, he groans his last.

“ But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks ;
When round he glares, all living creatures fly ;
He clears the desert with his rolling eye.
Say, mortal, does he rouse at thy command,
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand ?
Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,
And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood ;
Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey ?
By the pale Moon they take their destin'd round,
And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.
Now shrieks and dying groans the desert fill ;
They rage, they rend ; their ravenous jaws distil
With crimson foam ; and, when the banquet's o'er,
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore ;
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
And shudders at the talon in the dust.

“ Mild is my behemoth, though large his frame ;
Smooth is his temper, and repress his flame,
While unprovok'd. This native of the flood
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food ;
Earth sinks beneath him, as he moves along
To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.

See with what strength his harden'd loins are bound,
All over proof and shut against a wound.
How like a mountain cedar moves his tail !
Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
The bars of steel ; his ribs are ribs of brass ;
His port majestic and his armed jaw
Give the wide forest, and the mountain, law.
The mountains feed him ; there the beasts admire
The mighty stranger, and in dread retire ;
At length his greatness nearer they survey,
Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,
His noontide shelter from the burning heat ;
Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their shade.

“ His eye drinks Jordan up, when fir'd with
drought

He trusts to turn its current down his throat ;
In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain :
He sinks a river, and he thirsts again.

“ Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide :
With slender hair leviathan command,
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.
Will he become thy servant ? Will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown ?
Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,
And, bound in silk, with thy soft maidens play ?

“ Shall pompous banquets swell with such a prize ?
And the bowl journey round his ample size ?

Or the debating merchants share the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey ?
Through his firm skull what steel its way can win ?
What forceful engine can subdue his skin ?
Fly far, and live ; tempt not his matchless might :
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight ;
The rashest dare not rouse him up : Who then
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men ?

“ Am I a debtor ? Hast thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts that are on me conferr'd ?
My lavish fruit a thousand valleys fills,
And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills :
Earth, sea, and air, all Nature is my own ;
And stars and Sun are dust beneath my throne.
And dar'st thou with the World's great Father vie,
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye ?

“ At full my large leviathan shall rise,
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size.
Who, great in arms, e'er stripp'd his shining mail,
Or crown'd his triumph with a single scale ?
Whose heart sustains him to draw near ? Behold,
Destruction yawns ; his spacious jaws unfold,
And marshall'd round the wide expanse, disclose
Teeth edg'd with death, and crowding rows on rows :
What hideous fangs on either side arise !
And what a deep abyss between them lies !
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet sound,
The one how long, the other how profound.
His bulk is charg'd with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll,
As from a furnace ; and, when rous'd his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.

The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,
Thy terrour, this thy great superior please ;
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state ;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete ;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part ;
As steel his nerves ; as adamant his heart.

“ When, late awak'd, he rears him from the floods,
And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the Sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terrour spread,
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.

“ Large is his front ; and, when his burnish'd
eyes

Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise.

“ In vain may death in various shapes invade,
The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade ;
His naked breast their impotence defies ;
The dart rebounds, the brittle falchion flies.
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears ;
The cumber'd strand their wasted volleys strow ;
His sport, the rage and labour of the foe.

“ His pastimes like a cauldron boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with the rising mud ;
The billows feel him, as he works his way ;
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea ;
The foam high-wrought with white divides the green,
And distant sailors point where Death has been.

“ His *like* Earth bears not on her spacious face ;
Alone in Nature stands his dauntless race,

For utter ignorance of fear renown'd,
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around ;
Makes every swoln, disdainful heart subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of pride."
Then the Chaldaean eas'd his labouring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppress.

“ Thou canst accomplish all things, Lord of
Might !

And every thought is naked to thy sight.
But, oh ! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
Oft have I heard of thine almighty power ;
But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.
O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of Life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee.
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more :
Man is not made to *question*, but *adore*.”

THE COMPLAINT:

OR,

NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

Preface.

As the occasion of this poem was *real*, not *fictitious*; so the method pursued in it was rather *imposed*, by what spontaneously arose in the author's mind on that occasion, than *meditated* or *designed*; which will appear very probable from the nature of it. For it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short morals. Here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.

NIGHT THE FIRST.

ON

LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

TO THE RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONSLOW, SPEAKER OF
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TIR'D Nature's sweet restorer, balmy *Sleep* !
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where fortune smiles ; the wretched he forsakes ;
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose,
I wake : How happy they, who wake no more !
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.

I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought,
From wave to wave of *fancied* misery,
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.
Though now restor'd, 't is only change of pain,
(A bitter change!) severer for severe.
The *Day* too short for my distress; and *Night*,
E'en in the *zenith* of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her *ebon* throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!
Nor eye, nor listening ear, an object finds;
Creation sleeps. 'T is, as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.
And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd;
Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence and *Darkness*! solemn sisters! twins
From ancient *Night*, who nurse the tender thought
To *reason*, and on *reason* build *resolve*,
(That column of true majesty in man,)
Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;
The grave, your kingdom: *there* this frame shall fall
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye? —

Thou, who didst put to flight
Primeval *Silence*, when the morning stars
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball!
O thou, whose word from solid *darkness* struck
That spark, the Sun; strike wisdom from my soul;

My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Through this opaque of *Nature*, and of *soul*,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten, and to cheer. O lead my mind,
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe,)
Lead it through various scenes of *life* and *death* ;
And from each scene, the noblest truths inspire.
Nor less inspire my *conduct*, than my *song* ;
Teach my best reason, reason ; my best will
Teach rectitude ; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear :
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes *one*. We take no note of time
But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
It is the *knell* of my departed hours :
Where are they ? With the years beyond the flood.
It is the *signal* that demands dispatch ;
How much is to be done ? My hopes and fears
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down — On what ? a fathomless abyss !
A dread eternity ! how surely *mine* !
And can eternity belong to *me*,
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour ?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man !
How passing wonder He, who made him such !
Who centered in our make such strange extremes !
From different natures marvelously mixt,

Connection exquisite of distant worlds !
Distinguish'd *link* in being's endless chain !
Midway from *nothing* to the *Deity* !
A beam ethereal, sully'd and absorpt !
Though sully'd and dishonour'd, still divine !
Dim miniature of greatness absolute !
An heir of glory ! a frail child of dust !
Helpless immortal ! insect *infinite* !
A worm ! a god ! — I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost ! at home a stranger,
Thought wanders up and down, surpris'd, aghast,
And wondering at her *own* : How Reason reels !
O what a miracle to man is man,
Triumphantly distress'd ! what joy, what dread !
Alternately transported, and alarm'd !
What can preserve my life ? or what destroy ?
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave ;
Legions of angels can't confine me there.
'T is past conjecture ; all things rise in proof :
While o'er my limbs *sleep*'s soft dominion spread,
What though my soul fantastic measures trod
O'er fairy fields ; or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathless woods ; or, down the craggy steep
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool ;
Or scal'd the cliff ; or danc'd on hollow winds,
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain ?
Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod ;
Active, aërial, towering, unconfin'd,
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
E'en silent night proclaims my soul *immortal* :
E'en silent night proclaims eternal day.

For human weal, Heaven husbands all events;
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then *their* loss deplore, that are not lost?
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,
In infidel distress? Are *angels* there?
Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire?

They live! they greatly live a life on Earth
Unkindled, unconceiv'd; and from an eye
Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
On me, more justly number'd with the dead.
This is the desert, *this* the solitude:

How populous, how vital, is the grave!
This is creation's melancholy vault,
The vale funereal, the sad *cypress* gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty shades!
All, all on Earth, is *shadow*, all beyond
Is *substance*; the reverse is folly's *creed*:
How solid all, where change shall be no more!

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule:
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us *embryos* of existence free.
From *real* life, but little more remote
Is *he*, not yet a candidate for light,
The *future* embryo, slumbering in his sire.
Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
The life of gods, O transport! and of man.
Yet man, fool man! *here* buries all his thoughts;
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.

Prisoner of Earth, and pent beneath the Moon,
Here pinions all his wishes ; wing'd by Heaven
To fly at infinite ; and reach it there,
Where *seraphs* gather immortality,
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow,
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
Where momentary ages are no more ! [expire !
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death
And is it in the flight of threescore years,
To push eternity from human thought,
And smother souls immortal in the dust ?
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd or alarm'd,
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles *ocean* into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure ? It o'erwhelms myself ;
How was my heart incrustated by the world !
O how self-fetter'd was my grovelling soul !
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
In silken thought, which reptile *Fancy* spun,
Till darken'd *Reason* lay quite clouded o'er
With soft conceit of endless comfort *here*,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies !

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above):
Our *waking* dreams are fatal. How I dreamt
Of things impossible ! (Could sleep do more ?)
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change !
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave !
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life !

How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys !
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective !
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.
Where now my phrenzy's pompous furniture ?
The *cobweb'd* cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mouldering mud, is *royalty* to me !
The *spider's* most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss ! it breaks at every breeze.

O ye blest scenes of permanent delight !
Full, above measure ! lasting, beyond bound !
A *perpetuity* of bliss is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres ;
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour ;
And rarely for the better ; or the *best*,
More mortal than the *common* births of fate.
Each *moment* has its sickle, emulous
Of *Time's* enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes *empires* from the root ; each *moment* plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet *domestic* comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss ! sublunary bliss ! — proud words, and vain !
Implicit treason to divine decree !

A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven !
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace !
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart !

Death ! great proprietor of all ! 't is thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The Sun himself by thy permission shines ;
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy *partial* quiver on a mark so *mean* ?
Why thy *peculiar* rancour wreak'd on *me* ?
Insatiate archer ! could not *one* suffice ?
Thy shaft flew *thrice* ; and *thrice* my peace was slain ;
And thrice, ere thrice yon Moon had fill'd her horn.
O Cynthia ! why so pale ? Dost thou lament
Thy wretched neighbour ? Grieve to see thy wheel
Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life ?
How wanes my *borrow'd* bliss ! from *fortune's* smile,
Precarious courtesy ! not *virtue's* sure,
Self-given, *solar* ray of sound delight.

In every vary'd posture, place, and hour,
How widow'd every thought of every joy !
Thought, busy thought ! too busy for my peace !
Through the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves !)
Strays (wretched rover !) o'er the pleasing *past* ;
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays ;
And finds all desert *now* ; and meets the ghosts
Of my departed joys ; a numerous train !
I rue the riches of my former fate ;
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament ;

I tremble at the blessings once so dear ;
And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why *complain* ? or why complain for one ?
Hangs out the Sun his lustre but for me
The *single* man ? Are angels all beside ?
I mourn for millions : 't is the common lot ;
In *this* shape, or in *that*, has Fate entail'd
The mother's throes on all of woman born,
Not more the children, than sure heirs, of *pain*.

War, Famine, Pest, Volcano, Storm, and Fire,
Intestine broils, *Oppression*, with her heart
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.
God's image disinherited of day,
Here, plung'd in mines, forgets a Sun was made.
There, beings deathless as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life ;
And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.
Some, for hard masters, broken under arms,
In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread through realms their valour sav'd,
If so the tyrant, or his minion, doom.
Want, and incurable *Disease*, (fell pair !)
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize
At once ; and make a refuge of the grave.
How groaning *hospitals* eject their dead !
What numbers groan for sad admission there !
What numbers, once in *Fortune's* lap high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of Charity !
To shock us more, solicit it in vain !
Ye silken sons of pleasure ! since in pains
You rue more modish visits, visit *here*,
And breathe from your debauch : *give*, and reduce

Surfeit's dominion o'er you : but so great
Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy ! did sorrow seize on *such* alone.
Not *prudence* can defend, or *virtue* save ;
Disease invades the chastest temperance ;
And punishment the guiltless ; and alarm,
Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.
Man's caution often into danger turns ;
And his guard, falling, crushes him to death.
Not *happiness* itself makes good her name ;
Our very wishes give us not our wish.
How distant oft the thing we doat on most,
From that for which we doat, *felicity* !
The *smoothest* course of Nature has its pains !
And *truest* friends, through error, wound our rest.
Without misfortune, what calamities !
And what hostilities, without a foe !
Nor are foes wanting to the best on Earth.
But endless is the list of human ills,
And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man ! the rest a *waste*,
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands :
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.
Such is Earth's melancholy map ! but, far
More sad ! this Earth is a true map of *man*.
So bounded are its haughty lord's *delights*
To *woe's* wide empire ; where deep *troubles* toss,
Loud *sorrows* howl, envenom'd *passions* bite,
Ravenous *calamities* our vitals seize,
And threatening *fate* wide opens to devour.
What then am I, who sorrow for *myself* !

In age, in infancy, from other's aid
Is all our hope ; to teach us to be *kind*.
That, Nature's *first*, *last* lesson to mankind :
The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels.
More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts ;
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
Nor virtue, more than *prudence*, bids me give
Swoln thought a *second* channel ; who divide,
They weaken too, the torrent of their grief.
Take then, O *World* ! thy much indebted tear :
How sad a sight is human happiness,
To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour !
O thou ! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults !
Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate ? [ine.
I know thou wouldst ; thy pride demands it from
Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,
The salutary censure of a friend.
Thou happy *wretch* ! by blindness thou art blest ;
By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles.
Know, *smiler* ! at thy peril art thou pleas'd !
Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.
Misfortune, like a creditor severe,
But rises in demand for her delay ;
She makes a scourge of past prosperity,
To sting thee more, and double thy distress.
Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee,
Thy fond heart dances, while the *Siren* sings.
Dear is thy welfare ; think me not unkind ;
I would not damp, but to secure thy joys.
Think not that *fear* is sacred to the storm :
Stand on thy guard against the *smiles* of Fate.
Is Heaven tremendous in its frowns ? Most sure ;

And in its favours formidable too :
Its favours here are trials, not rewards ;
A call to duty, not discharge from care ;
And should alarm us, full as much as woes ;
Awake us to their *cause* and *consequence* ;
And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert ;
Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,
Lest, while we clasp, we kill them ; nay, invert
To worse than *simple* misery, their charms.
Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,
With rage envenom'd rise against our peace,
Beware what Earth calls happiness ; beware
All joys, but joys that never can expire.
Who builds on less than an *immortal* base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine died with thee, Philander ! thy last sigh
Dissolv'd the charm ; the disenchanted Earth
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers ?
Her golden mountains, where ? all darken'd down
To naked waste ; a dreary vale of tears ;
The great magician's dead ! Thou poor, pale piece
Of out-cast earth, in darkness ! what a change
From yesterday ! Thy darling hope so near,
(Long-labour'd prize !) O how ambition flush'd
Thy glowing cheek ! Ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praise. *Death's* subtle seed within
(Sly, treacherous miner !) working in the dark,
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
The worm to riot on that rose so red,
Unfaded ere it fell ; one moment's prey !

Man's foresight is *conditionally* wise ;

Lorenzo ! wisdom into folly turns
Of, the first instant, its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye !
The *present* moment terminates our sight ; [next ;
Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the
We penetrate, we prophesy in vain.

Time is dealt out by particles ; and each,
Ere mingled with the streaming sands of life,
By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn
Deep silence, " Where eternity begins."

By Nature's law, what may be, may be *now* ;
There 's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn ?
Where is to-morrow ? In another world.
For numbers this is certain ; the reverse
Is sure to none ; and yet on this *perhaps*,
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant, we build
Our mountain hopes, spin out eternal schemes,
As we the fatal sisters could out-spin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud :
Nor had he cause ; a warning was deny'd :
How many fall as sudden, not as safe !
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home,
Of human ills the last extreme beware,
Beware ; Lorenzo ! a *slow sudden* death.
How dreadful that deliberate surprise !
Be wise to-day ; 't is madness to defer ;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead ;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.

Procrastination is the thief of time ;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange ?
That 't is so frequent, *this* is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
The palm, " That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born.
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They one day shall not drivel : and their pride
On this reversion takes up ready praise ;
At least, their own ; their *future* selves applaud ;
How excellent that life they *ne'er* will lead !
Time lodg'd in their *own* hands is *folly's* vails ;
That lodg'd in *fate's*, to *wisdom* they consign ;
The thing they 'can't but *purpose*, they *postpone* ;
'T is not in *folly*, not to scorn a fool ;
And scarce in human *wisdom*, to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through every stage : when young, indeed,
In full content we, sometimes, nobly rest,
Unanxious for *ourselves* ; and only wish,
As duteous sons, our *fathers* were more wise.
At *thirty* man *suspects* himself a fool ;
Knows it at *forty*, and reforms his plan ;
At *fifty* chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to *resolve* ;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves ; and re-resolves ; then dies the same.

And why ? Because he thinks himself immortal.
All men think all men mortal, but themselves ;

Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate
Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden
dread ;

But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon close ; where, past the shaft, no trace is
found.

As from the *wing*, no scar the sky retains ;
The parted wave no furrow from the *keel* ;
So dies in human hearts the thoughts of death.
E'en with the tender tear which Nature sheds
O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
Can I forget Philander ? That were strange !
O my full heart ! — But should I give it vent,
The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
And the *lark* listen to my *midnight* song.

The sprightly *lark's* shrill matin wakes the morn ;
Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel ! like thee,
And call the stars to listen : every star
Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.
Yet be not vain ; there are, who thine excel,
And charm through distant ages : wrapt in shade,
Prisoner of darkness ! to the silent *hours*,
How often I repeat their rage divine,
To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe !
I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
Dark, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides !
Or, Milton ! thee ; ah, could I reach your strain !
Or *his*, who made Mæonides our *own*.
Man too he sung : *immortal* man I sing ;
Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life ;

What, *now*, but immortality can please?
 O had *he* press'd his theme, pursued the track,
 Which opens out of darkness into day!
 O had he, mounted on his wing of fire,
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung *immortal* man!
 How had it blest mankind, and rescued me!

NIGHT THE SECOND.

ON

TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON

"*When the cock crew, he wept*" — smote by that eye
 Which looks on me, on all: that power, who bids
This midnight sentinel, with clarion shrill,
 Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
 Rouse souls from slumber, into thoughts of *Heaven*.
 Shall I, too, weep? Where then is fortitude?
 And, fortitude abandon'd, where is man?
 I know the terms on which he sees the light;
 He that is born, is 'listed; life is war;
 Eternal war with woe. Who bears it best,
 Deserves it least. — On *other* themes I'll dwell.
 Lorenzo! let me turn *my* thoughts on thee,
 And *thine*, on themes may profit; profit there
 Where most they need. Themes, too, the genuine
 growth
 Of dear Philander's dust. He *thus*, though dead,
 May still befriend — What themes? *Time's won-*
 drous price,

Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene.

So could I touch these themes, as might obtain
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,
The good deed would delight me; half impress
On my dark cloud an Iris; and from grief
Call glory. — Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?
I know thou say'st it: Says thy *life* the same?
He mourns the dead, who lives as they desire.
Where is that thirst, that avarice of time,
(O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,
As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
O *time*! than gold more sacred; more a load
Than lead, to fools; and fools *reputed* wise.
What *moment* granted man without account?
What *years* are squander'd, *wisdom's* debt unpaid!
Our wealth in days, all due to *that* discharge.
Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he 's at the door,
Insidious *Death*! should his strong hand arrest,
No composition sets the prisoner free.

Eternity's inexorable chain

Fast binds; and vengeance claims the full arrear.

How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late
Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!

That *time* is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe;

Fain would I pay thee with *eternity*.

But ill my genius answers my desire;

My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.

Accept the will; — *that* dies not with my strain.

For what calls *thy* disease, Lorenzo? not

For *Esculapian*, but for *moral* aid.

Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.

Youth is not rich in *time*, it may be poor;

Part with it as with money, sparing ; pay
No moment, but in purchase of its worth ;
And what its worth, ask death-beds ; they can tell.
Part with it as with life, reluctant ; big
With holy hope of nobler time to come ;
Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark
Of men and angels ; virtue more divine.

Is this our *duty, wisdom, glory, gain* ?
(*These Heaven benign in vital union binds*)
And sport we like the natives of the bough,
When vernal suns inspire ? *Amusement* reigns
Man's great demand : to trifle, is to live :
And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?

Thou say'st I *preach*, Lorenzo ! 't is confest.
What if, for once, I preach thee quite *awake* ?
Who wants *amusement* in the flame of battle ?
Is it not treason to the soul *immortal*,
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize ?
Will toys amuse, when medicines cannot cure ?
When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
As lands, and cities with their glittering spires,
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there ?
Will toys amuse ? No : thrones will then be toys,
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time ? — Its loss we dearly buy.
What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports ?
He pleads *time's* numerous *blanks* ; he loudly
pleads

The straw-like *trifles* on life's common stream.
From whom those *blanks* and *trifles*, but from *thee* ?

No *blank*, no *trifle*, Nature made, or meant.
Virtue, or *purpos'd* virtue, still be thine ;
This cancels thy complaint at once. *This* leaves
In act no *trifle*, and no *blank* in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all ;
This, the blest art of turning all to gold ;
This the good heart's prerogative to raise
A royal tribute from the poorest hours ;
Immense revenue ! every moment *pays*,
If nothing more than *purpose* in thy power ;
Thy purpose firm, is equal to the deed :
Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly ; angels could no more.
Our *outward* act indeed admits restraint ;
'T is not in things o'er *thought* to domineer ;
Guard well thy thought ; our thoughts are heard in
Heaven.

On all important *time*, through every age,
Though much, and warm, the wise have urg'd ; the
man

Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.
“ *I've lost a day* ” — the prince who nobly cried
Had been an emperor without his crown ;
Of Rome ? Say, rather, lord of human race :
He spoke, as if deputed by mankind.
So should all speak : so *Reason* speaks in all :
From the soft whispers of that God in man,
Why fly to folly, why to phrenzy fly,
For rescue from the *blessing* we possess ?
Time, the supreme ! — Time is Eternity ;
Pregnant with all eternity can give ;
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.

Who murders time, he crushes in the birth
A power ethereal, only *not* ador'd.

Ah ! how unjust to Nature and himself,
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man !
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We censure Nature for a span too short ;
That span too short, we tax as tedious too ;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves.
Art, brainless *Art* ! our furious charioteer
(For *Nature*'s voice unstifled would recall)
Drives headlong towards the precipice of death ;
Death, most our dread ; death *thus* more dreadful
made :

O what a riddle of absurdity !
Leisure is pain ; takes off our chariot-wheels ;
How heavily we drag the load of life !
Blest leisure is our curse ; like that of Cain,
It makes us wander ; wander Earth around
To fly that tyrant, Thought. As Atlas groan'd
The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.
We cry for mercy to the next amusement ;
The next amusement mortgages our fields ;
Slight inconvenience ! Prisons hardly frown,
From hateful *Time* if prisons set us free.
Yet when *Death* kindly tenders us relief,
We call him cruel ; years to moments shrink,
Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd.
To man's false optics (from his folly false)
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age ;

Behold him, when past by ; what then is seen,
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds ?
And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
Rueful, aghast ! cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors, and these ills ;
To Nature just, their *cause* and *cure* explore.
Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense ;
No niggard, Nature ; men are prodigals.
We *waste*, not *use* our time ; we breathe, not live.
Time *wasted* is existence, *us'd* is life,
And *bare existence*, man, to *live* ordain'd,
Wrings, and oppresses with enormous weight,
And why ? since *Time* was given for use, not waste,
Injoin'd to fly ; with tempest, tide, and stars,
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man ;
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure ; waste, a pain ;
That man might *feel* his error, if unseen :
And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure ;
Not, blundering, split on idleness for ease.
Life's cares are comforts ; such by Heaven design'd ;
He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.
Cares are employments, and without employ
The soul is on a rack ; the rack of *rest*,
To souls most adverse ; action all their joy.

Here then, the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds ;
Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
We rave, we wrestle, with *great Nature's plan* ;
We thwart the Deity ; and 't is decreed,
Who thwart his will, shall contradict their own.
Hence our unnatural quarrels with ourselves ;
Our thoughts at enmity ; our bosom-broil ;
We push *Time* from us, and we wish him back :

Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life ;
Life we think long, and short ; *Death* seek, and
shun :

Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
United jar, and yet are loth to part.

Oh the dark days of vanity ! while here,
How tasteless ! and how terrible, when gone !
Gone ! they ne'er go ; when past, they haunt us
still ;

The spirit walks of ev'ry day deceased ;
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
Nor death, nor life delight us. If time *past*,
And time *possest*, both pain us, what can please ?
That which the Deity to please ordain'd,
Time *us'd*. The man who consecrates his hours
By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death ;
He *walks with Nature* ; and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen : see next
Time's *nature, origin, importance, speed* ;
And thy great *gain* from urging his career.—
All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
He looks on *Time* as nothing. Nothing else
Is truly man's ; 't is fortune's — Time's a god.
Hast thou ne'er heard of *Time's* omnipotence ;
For, or *against*, what wonders he can do !
And *will* : to stand blank *neuter* he disdains.
Not on *those terms* was *Time* (Heaven's stranger !)
sent

On his important embassy to man.
Lorenzo ! no : On the long-destin'd hour,
From everlasting ages growing ripe,

That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,
And big with Nature, rising in his might,
Call'd forth creation (for then *Time* was born),
By Godhead streaming through a thousand worlds ;
Not on *those terms*, from the great days of Heaven,
From old *Eternity's* mysterious orb,
Was *Time* cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;
'The skies, which watch him in his new abode,
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres ;
That horologe machinery divine. [play,
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children
Like numerous wings around him, as he flies :
Or, rather, as unequal plumes, they shape
His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,
And join anew *Eternity*, his sire ;
In his *immutability* to nest,
When worlds, that count his circles *now*, unhing'd
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush
To *timeless* night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy ? Why with levities
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight ?
Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done ?
Man flies from *Time*, and *Time* from man ; too soon
In sad divorce this double flight must end ;
And then, where are we ? where, Lorenzo ! then
Thy sports ? thy pomps ? — I grant thee, in a state
Not unambitious ; in the *ruffled* shroud,
Thy Parian tomb's *triumphant arch* beneath.
Has *Death* his fopperies ? Then well may *Life*
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye *well-array'd* ! ye lilies of our land !
Ye lilies *males* ! who neither toil, nor spin,
(As sister lilies *might*) if not so wise
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight !
Ye *delicate* ! who nothing can support,
Yourselves most insupportable ! for whom
The winter rose must blow, the Sun put on
A brighter beam in Leo ; silky-soft
Favonius breathe still softer, or be chid ;
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms !
O ye Lorenzos of our age ! who deem
One moment unamus'd, a misery
Not made for feeble man ! who call aloud
For every bawble drivell'd o'er by sense ;
For rattles, and conceits of every cast,
For change of follies, and relays of joy,
To drag your patient through the tedious length
Of a short winter's *day* — say, sages ! say,
Wit's oracles ! say, dreamers of gay dreams !
How will you weather an *eternal night*,
Where such expedients fail ? [sleep
O treacherous *Conscience* ! while she seems to
On *rose* and *myrtle*, lull'd with syren song ;
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
On headlong *appetite* the slacken'd rein,
And give us up to *licence* unrecall'd,
Unmark'd ; — see, from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the gross *act* alone employs her pen ;
She reconnoitres *Fancy's* airy band ;

A watchful foe ! the formidable spy,
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp :
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity.
As all-rapacious usurers conceal
Their doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs,
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
Us spendthrifts of inestimable *time* ;
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied ;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
Writes our whole history : which *Death* shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear ;
And *Judgment* publish ; publish to more worlds
Than this ; and endless age in groans resound.
Lorenzo, *such* that *sleeper* in thy breast !
Such is her slumber ; and her vengeance *such*
For slighted counsel ; *such* thy future peace !
And think'st thou still thou canst be wise *too soon* ?
But why on *time* so lavish is my song ?
On this great *theme* kind *Nature* keeps a school,
To teach her sons herself. Each night we die,
Each morn are born anew : each day, a life !
And shall we kill each day ? If *Trifling* kills ;
Sure *Vice* must butcher. O what heaps of slain
Cry out for vengeance on us ! *Time* destroy'd
Is *suicide*, where more than *blood* is spilt.
Time flies, *Death* urges, knells call, Heaven invites,
Hell threatens : All exerts ; in effort, all ;
More than creation labours ! — labours *more* ?
And is there in creation what, amidst
This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,
And ardent energy, supinely yawns ?

Man sleeps ; and *man* alone ; and *man*, whose fate,
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf
A moment trembles ; drops ! and *man*, for whom
All else is in alarm ! *man*, the sole cause
Of this surrounding storm ! and yet he sleeps,
As the storm rock'd to rest. — Throw *years* away ?
Throw *empires*, and be blameless. Moments seize ;
Heaven's on their wing : a moment we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid *Day* stand
still,

Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
The period past, re-give the given hour.
Lorenzo, *more* than miracles we want ;
Lorenzo — O for yesterdays to come !

Such is the language of the man *awake* ;
His ardour such, for what *oppresses* thee.
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo ? No ;
That *more* than miracle the gods indulge ;
To-day is *yesterday* return'd ; return'd
Full-power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
Let it not share its predecessor's fate ;
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.
Shall it evaporate in fume ? fly off
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still ?
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd ?
More wretched for the clemencies of Heaven ?

Where shall I find *him* ? Angels ! tell me where.
You know him : he is near you : point him out :
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow ?
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers ?

Your golden wings, *now* hovering o'er him, shed
Protection ; now, are waving in applause
To that blest son of foresight ! lord of fate !
That awful independent on *to-morrow* !
Whose *work is done* ; who triumphs in the *past* ;
Whose *yesterdays* look backwards with a smile ;
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly ;
That common, but opprobrious lot ! past hours,
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,
All feeling of futurity benumb'd ;
All god-like passion for eternals quencht ;
All relish of realities expir'd ;
Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies ;
Our freedom chain'd ; quite wingless our desire ;
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar ;
Prone to the centre ; crawling in the dust ;
Dismounted every great and glorious aim ;
Embruted every faculty divine ;
Heart-bury'd in the rubbish of the world.
The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters
chang'd :

Though we from *Earth ; ethereal*, they that fell.
Such veneration due, O man, to man.
Who venerate themselves, the world despise.
For what, gay friend ! is this *escutcheon'd* world,
Which hangs out Death in one eternal night ;
A night, that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
And wraps our thought, at banquets, in the shroud ?

Life's little stage is a small eminence,
Inch-high the grave above ; that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude : We gaze around ;
We read their monuments ; we sigh ; and while
We sigh, we sink ; and *are* what we deplor'd ;
Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot !

Is Death at distance ? No ; he has been on thee,
And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.
Those hours that lately smil'd, where are they now ?
Pallid to thought, and ghastly ! drown'd, all drown'd
In that great deep, which nothing disembogues !
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.
The rest are on the wing : how fleet their flight !
Already has the fatal train took fire ;
A moment, and the world's blown up *to thee* ;
The Sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'T is greatly wise to talk with our past hours ;
And ask them, what report they bore to Heaven ;
And how they might have borne more welcome
news,

Their answers form what men *experience* call ;
If *wisdom's* friend, her best ; if not, worst foe.
O reconcile them ! Kind *Experience* cries,
“ There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs ;
The more our joy, the more we know it vain ;
And by success are tutor'd to despair.”
Nor is it only thus, but *must* be so.

Who knows not this, though gray, is still a child.
Loose then from Earth the grasp of fond desire,
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes ?

Since by *life's* passing breath, blown up from Earth,
 Light as the summer's dust, we take in air
 A moment's giddy flight, and fall again ;
 Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
 And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more ;
 Since *then* (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)
 We, sore amaz'd, from out Earth's ruins crawl,
 And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
 As man's own choice (controller of the skies !)
 As man's despotic will, perhaps *one* hour,
 (O how omnipotent is time !) decrees ;
 Should not each *warning* give a strong alarm ?
 Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
 From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead !
 Should not each *dial* strike us as we pass,
 Portentous, as the *written wall*, which struck,
 O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
 Ere-while high-flusht with insolence and wine ?
 Like *that*, the dial speaks ; and points to thee,
 Lorenzo ! loth to break thy banquet up.
 " O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee ;
 And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade."
 Its silent language such : nor need'st thou call
 Thy *Magi*, to decypher what it means.
 Know, like the Median, fate is in thy walls :
 Dost ask, *How ? Whence ?* Belshazzar-like, amaz'd ?
 Man's make encloses the sure seeds of death ;
Life feeds the murderer : Ingrate ! he thrives
 On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies :
 That *solar shadow*, as it measures life,
 It life resembles too : life speeds away

From point to point, though seeming to stand still.
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth :
Too subtle is the movement to be seen ;
Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
Warnings point out our danger ; *gnomons*, time :
As these are useless when the Sun is set ;
So those, but when more glorious *reason* shines.
Reason should judge in all ; in reason's eye,
That sedentary shadow travels hard.
But such our gravitation to the wrong,
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
'T is later with the wise than he 's aware :
A Wilmington goes slower than the Sun :
And all mankind mistake their time of day ;
E'en age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
In furrow'd brows. To gentle life's descent
We shut our eyes, and think it is a-plain.
We take fair days in winter, for the spring ;
And turn our blessing into bane. Since oft
Man must *compute* that age he cannot *feel*,
He scarce believes he 's older for his years.
Thus, at life's latest eve, we keep in store
One disappointment sure, to crown the rest ;
The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On *this*, or similar, Philander ! thou
Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue ;
And strong, to wield all science, worth the name ;
How often we talk'd down the summer's Sun,
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream !
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve,
By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,
Best found, so sought ; to the *recluse* more coy !

Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip ;
Clean runs the thread ; if not, 't is thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song ;
Song, fashionably fruitless ; such as stains
The *fancy*, and unhallow'd *passion* fires ;
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo ! what a friend contains ?
As bees *mixt nectar* draw from fragrant flowers,
So men from friendship, *wisdom* and *delight* ;
Twins ty'd by Nature ; if they part, they die.
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad ?
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want
air,

And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the Sun.
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied ;
Speech, thought's canal ! speech, thought's criterion
too !

Thought, in the mine, may come forth gold, or dross ;
When coin'd in word, we know its *real* worth.
If sterling, store it for thy future use :
'T will buy thee benefit ; perhaps renown.
Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd ;
Teaching, we learn ; and, giving, we retain
The births of intellect ; when dumb, forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire ;
Speech burnishes our mental magazine ;
Brightens, for ornament ; and whets, for use.
What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie,
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And rusted in ; who might have borne an edge,
And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech ;
If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue !

'T is thought's exchange, which, like th' alternate
push

Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
And defecates the student's standing pool.

In *contemplation* is his proud resource ?

'T is poor, as proud, by *converse* unsustain'd.
Rude thought runs wild in *contemplation's* field ;
Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bitt
Of due restraint ; and *emulation's* spur
Gives graceful énérgy, by rivals aw'd.

'T is converse qualifies for solitude ;

As exercise, for salutary rest.

By that untutor'd, *Contemplation* raves ;
And *Nature's* fool, by *Wisdom* is undone.

Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,

What is she, but the means of *happiness* ?

That unobtain'd, than folly more a fool ;

A melancholy fool, without her bells.

Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives
The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.

Nature, in zeal for human amity,

Denies, or damps, an *undivided* joy.

Joy is an import ; joy is an exchange ;

Joy flies monopolists : it calls for *two* ;

Rich fruit ! Heaven-planted ! never pluckt by *one*.

Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give

To *social* man true relish of himself.

Full on ourselves, descending in a line,

Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight :

Delight intense is taken by rebound ;

Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial *Happiness*, whene'er she stoops
To visit Earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent Heaven — the bosom of a friend ;
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
Each other's pillow to repose divine.
Beware the counterfeit ; in *passion's* flame
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
True love strikes root in *reason* ; *passion's* foe :
Virtue alone entenders us for life :

I wrong her much — entenders us for ever :
Of *Friendship's* fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
Is *virtue* kindling at a rival fire,
And, *emulously*, rapid in her race.
O the soft enmity ! endearing strife !
This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,
And gives the rivet of eternity. [themes,

From *Friendship*, which outlives my former
Glorious survivor of old *Time* and *Death* ;
From *Friendship*, thus, that flower of heavenly seed ;
The wise extract Earth's most Hyblean bliss,
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

But for whom blossoms this Elysian *flower* ?
Abroad they find, who cherish it at *home*.

Lorenzo ! pardon what my love extorts,
An honest love, and not afraid to frown.
Though choice of follies fasten on the *great*,
None clings more obstinate than fancy fond,
That sacred *Friendship* is their easy prey ;
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,
Or fascination of a high-born smile.
Their smiles, the *great*, and the *coquet*, throw out

For others' hearts, tenacious of their own ;
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.
Ye fortune's cofferers ! Ye powers of wealth !
Can gold gain friendship ? Impudence of hope !
As well mere man an angel might beget.
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.
Lorenzo ! pride repress ; nor hope to find
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.
All like the purchase ; few the price will pay ;
And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)
I show thee friendship delicate, as dear,
Of tender violations apt to die ?
Reserve will wound it ; and *distrust*, destroy.
Deliberate in all things with thy friend.
But since friends grow not thick on every bough,
Nor every friend unrotten at the core ;
First, on thy friend, deliberate with thyself ;
Pause, ponder, sift ; not eager in the choice,
Nor jealous of the chosen ; fixing, fix ;
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.
Well, for thy friend ; but nobler far for thee ;
How gallant danger for Earth's highest prize !
A friend is worth all hazards we can run.
“ Poor is the friendless master of a world :
A world in purchase for a friend is gain.”

So sung he, (angels hear that angels sing
Angels from friendship gather half their joy,)
So sung Philander, as his friend went round
In the rich *ichor*, in the generous blood
Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,
A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.

He drank long health, and virtue, to his friend ;
His friend, who warm'd him more, who more in-
spir'd.

Friendship 's the wine of life ; but friendship *new*
(Not such was his) is neither strong, nor pure.
O ! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
And elevating spirit, of a friend,
For twenty summers ripening by my side,
All feculence of falsehood long thrown down ;
All social virtues rising in his soul ;
As crystal clear ; and smiling as they rise !
Here nectar flows ; it sparkles in our sight ;
Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart :
High-flavour'd bliss for gods ! on Earth how rare !
On Earth how *lost* ! — Philander is no more.

Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song ?
Am I too warm ? Too warm I cannot be,
I lov'd him much ; but now I love him more.
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half-conceal'd,
Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold ;
How blessings brighten as they take their flight !
His flight Philander took ; his upward flight,
If ever soul ascended. Had he dropt,
(That eagle genius !) O had he let fall
One feather as he flew ; I, then, had wrote,
What friends might flatter ; prudent foes forbear ;
Rivals scarce damn ; and Zoilus reprieve.
Yet what I can, I must ; it were profane
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
Strange ! the theme most affecting, most sublime,

Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung !
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,
Painim or *Christian* ; to the blush of wit.
Man's highest triumph ! man's profoundest fall !
The *death-bed* of the just ! is yet undrawn
By mortal hand ! it merits a divine :
Angels should paint it, angels ever *there* :
There, on a post of honour, and of joy.

Dare I presume, then ? but *Philander* bids ;
And glory tempts, and inclination calls —
Yet am I struck ; as struck the soul, beneath
Aërial groves ' impenetrable gloom ;
Or, in some mighty *ruin*'s solemn shade ;
Or, gazing by pale lamps on *high-born dust*,
In vaults ; thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings ;
Or, at the midnight *altar*'s hallow'd flame.
Is it religion to proceed ? I pause —
And enter, aw'd, the temple of my theme.
Is it his death-bed ? No : it is his shrine :
Behold him, there, just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
Of *virtuous* life, quite in the verge of Heaven.
Fly, ye profane ! If not, draw near with awe,
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance,
That threw in this *Bethesda* your disease ;
If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure.
For, *here*, resistless demonstration dwells ;
A death-bed 's a detector of the heart.
Here tir'd *dissimulation* drops her mask,
Through life's grimace, that mistress of the scene !
Here real, and apparent, are the same.

You see the *man* ; you see his hold on Heaven,
If sound his virtue ; as Philander's sound.
Heaven waits not the last moment ; owns her friends
On this side death, and points them out to men ;
A lecture, silent, but of sovereign power !
To vice, confusion ; and to virtue, peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death !
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
Philander ! he severely frown'd on thee.
“ No warning given ! Unceremonious Fate !
A sudden rush from life's meridian joy !
A wrench from all we *love* / from all we *are* !
A restless bed of pain ! a plunge opaque
Beyond conjecture ! feeble *Nature's* dread !
Strong *Reason's* shudder at the dark unknown !
A sun extinguish'd ! a just-opening grave !
And oh ! the last, last, — what ? (can words express ?
'Thought reach it ?) the last — *silence* of a friend !”
Where are those horrors, that amazement, where,
This hideous group of ills, which *singly* shock,
Demand from man ? — I thought him man till *now*.

Through *Nature's* wreck, through vanquisht
agonies,
(Like the stars struggling through this midnight
gloom,)

What gleams of joy ! what more than human peace !
Where, the frail mortal ? the poor abject worm ?
No, not in death, the *mortal* to be found.
His conduct is a legacy for all ;
Richer than *Mammon's* for his single heir.
His comforters he comforts ; great in ruin,

With unreluctant grandeur, *gives*, not *yields*
His soul sublime ; and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene !
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fixt to man ?
His God sustains him in his final hour !
His final hour brings glory to his God !
Man's glory Heaven vouchsafes to call her own.
We gaze, we weep ; mixt tears of grief, of joy !
Amazement strikes ! devotion bursts to flame !
Christians adore ! and Infidels believe !

As some tall tower, or lofty mountain's brow,
Detains the Sun, illustrious, from its height ;
While rising vapours, and descending shades,
With damps and darkness, drown the spacious vale ;
Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,
Philander, thus, augustly rears his head,
At that black hour, which general horror sheds
On the low level of th' inglorious throng :
Sweet *Peace*, and heavenly *Hope*, and humble *Joy*,
Divinely beam on his exalted soul ;
Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,
With incommunicable lustre bright.

NIGHT THE THIRD.

NARCISSA.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF PORTLAND.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.

VIRG

FROM *dreams*, where thought in fancy's maze runs
mad,
To *reason*, that heaven-lighted lamp in man,

Once more I wake ; and at the destin'd hour,
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
I keep my assignation with my woe.

O ! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul !
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet ! communion large and high !
Our *reason*, *guardian angel*, and our *God* !
Then nearest these, when others most remote ;
And all, ere long, shall be remote, *but* these.
How dreadful, *then*, to meet them all alone,
A stranger ! unacknowledg'd ! unapprov'd !
Now woo them ; wed them ; bind them to thy breast ;
To win thy wish, creation has no more.
Or if we wish a *fourth*, it is a friend —
But friends, how mortal ! dangerous the desire !

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head ;
And reeling through the wilderness of joy ;
Where *Sense* runs savage, broke from *Reason's* chain !
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike ; unlike my song ;
Unlike the deity my song invokes.
I to *Day's* soft-ey'd sister pay my court,
(*Endymion's* rival !) and her aid implore ;
Now first implor'd in succour to the *Muse*.

Thou, who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form *,
And modestly forego thine own ! O thou,
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire !
Say, why not Cynthia patroness of song ?

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

As thou her crescent, she thy character
Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute
This revolution in the world *inspir'd*?
Ye train Pierian! to the *lunar* sphere,
In silent hour, address your ardent call
For aid immortal; less her brother's right.
She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,
A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of Heaven!
What title, or what name, endears the most!
Cynthia! Cyllené! Phœbe! or dost hear
With higher gust, fair Portland of the skies?
Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,
More powerful than of old Circean charm?
Come; but from heavenly banquets with thee bring
The soul of song, and whisper in my ear
The theft divine; or in propitious dreams [breast
(For dreams are thine) transfuse it through the
Of thy first votary. — But not thy last;
If, like thy *namesake*, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be; kind on such a theme;
A theme so like thee, a quite *lunar* theme,
Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!
A theme that rose all-pale, and told my soul
'T was *night*; on her fond hopes perpetual night;
A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp,
Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.
Narcissa follows, ere his tomb is clos'd.
Woes cluster; rare are *solitary* woes;
They love a train, they tread each other's heel;

Her death invades *his* mournful right, and claims
The grief that started from my lids for him :
Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,
Or shares it, ere it falls. So frequent death,
Sorrow he *more* than causes, he confounds ;
For human sighs his rival strokes contend,
And make distress, distraction. Oh Philander !
What was thy fate ? A double fate to me ;
Portent, and pain ! a menace, and a blow !
Like the black raven hovering o'er my peace,
Not less a bird of omen, than of prey.
It call'd Narcissa long before her hour ;
It call'd her tender soul, by break of bliss,
From the first blossom, from the buds of joy ;
Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves
In this inclement clime of human life.

Sweet harmonist ! and beautiful as sweet !
And young as beautiful ! and soft as young !
And gay as soft ! and innocent as gay !
And happy (if aught happy *here*) as good !
For fortune fond had built her nest on high.
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,
Transfixt by *fate* (who loves a lofty mark),
How from the summit of the grove she fell,
And left it unharmonious ! All its charms
Extinguisht in the wonders of her song !
Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain
(O to forget her !) thrilling through my heart !

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy ; this group
Of bright ideas, flowers of Paradise,
As yet unforfeit ! in one blaze we bind,

Kneel and present it to the skies ; as all
We guess of Heaven : and *these* were all her own,
And she was mine ; and I was — *was* ! — most
blest —

Gay title of the deepest misery !
As bodies grow more ponderous, robb'd of life ;
Good lost weighs more in grief, than gain'd in joy,
Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay ;
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there,
Far lovelier ! pity swells the tide of love.
And will not the severe excuse a sigh ?
Scorn the proud man that is asham'd to weep ;
Our tears *indulg'd* indeed deserve our shame.
Ye that e'er lost an angel ! pity me.

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight ;
And on her cheek, the residence of spring,
Pale omen sat ; and scatter'd fears around
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze,
That once had seen ?) with haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the Sun ; the Sun
(As if the Sun could envy) check'd his beam,
Deny'd his wonted succour ; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells
Of lilies ; fairest lilies, not so fair !

Queen lilies ! and ye painted populace !
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives !
In morn and evening dew, your beauties bathe,
And drink the Sun ; which gives your cheeks to
glow,

And out-blush (*mine* excepted) every fair ;
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
Which often cropt your odours, incense meet
To thought so pure ! Ye lovely fugitives !
Coëval race with man ! for man you smile !
Why not smile *at* him too ? You share indeed
His sudden pass ; but not his constant pain.

So man is made ; nought ministers delight,
But what his glowing passions can engage ;
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale ;
And anguish, after rapture, how severe !
Rapture ? Bold man ! who tempt'st the wrath
divine,

By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,
While *here*, presuming on the rights of Heaven.
For transport dost thou call on every hour,
Lorenzo ? At thy friend's expense, be wise ;
Lean not on Earth ; 't will pierce thee to the heart ;
A broken reed, at best ; but oft, a spear ;
On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.

Turn, hopeless thought ! turn from her : —

Thought repell'd

Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe.
Snatch'd ere thy prime ! and in thy bridal hour !
And when kind fortune, with thy lover, smil'd !
And when high-flavour'd thy fresh opening joys !
And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete !
And on a foreign shore ; where strangers wept !
Strangers to thee ; and more surprising still,
Strangers to kindness, wept : their eyes let fall
Inhuman tears ! strange tears ! that trickled down

From marble hearts ! obdurate tenderness !
A tenderness that call'd them more severe ;
In spite of Nature's soft persuasion, steel'd !
While *Nature* melted, *Superstition* rav'd ;
That mourn'd the dead ; and *this* denied a grave.

 Their sighs incens'd ; sighs foreign to the will !
Their will the *tiger* suck'd, outrag'd the storm.
For, oh ! the curst ungodliness of zeal !
While *sinful flesh* relented, *spirit* nurst
In blind *Infallibility's* embrace,
The *sainted spirit* petrify'd the breast ;
Denied the charity of dust, to spread
O'er dust ! a charity their dogs enjoy.
What could I do ? What succour ? What resource ?
With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole ;
With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd ;
Short in my duty ! coward in my grief !
More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,
With soft-suspended step, and muffled deep
In midnight darkness, *whisper'd* my last sigh.
I *whisper'd* what should echo through their realms ;
Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the
 skies.

Presumptuous fear ! How durst I dread her foes,
While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd ?
Pardon necessity, blest shade ! Of grief
And indignation rival bursts I pour'd ;
Half execration mingled with my prayer ;
Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd ;
Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust ;
Stamp'd the curst soil ; and with humanity
(Denied *Narcissa*) wish'd them all a grave.

Glows my resentment into guilt? What guilt
Can equal violations of the dead?
The dead how sacred! Sacred is the dust
Of this Heaven-labour'd form, erect, divine!
This Heaven-assum'd majestic robe of Earth,
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
With azure bright, and cloth'd the Sun in gold.
When every passion sleeps that can offend;
When strikes us every motive that can melt;
When man can wreak his rancour *uncontrol'd*,
That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;
Then, spleen to *dust* / the dust of innocence!
An angel's dust! — This Lucifer transcends;
When he contended for the patriarch's bones,
'T was not the strife of malice, but of pride;
The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

For less than this is shocking in a race
Most *wretched*, but from streams of mutual love;
And *uncreated*, but for love divine,
And, but for love divine, this moment *lost*,
By fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
Most horrid! 'Mid stupendous, highly strange!
Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs;
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity;
What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye stars!
And thou, pale Moon! turn paler at the sound;
Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.
A previous blast foretels the rising storm;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;
Volcanoes bellow ere they disembogue;

Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;
And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:
Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of fancy? Would it were!
Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,
That hideous sight, a *naked* human heart.

Fir'd is the Muse? And let the Muse be fir'd:
Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks, he feels,
And in the nerve most tender, in his friends?
Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes:
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him.
But he, nor I, feel more; past ills, Narcissa!
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;
Pangs numerous, as the numerous ills that swarm'd
O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clustering there
Thick as the locusts on the land of Nile,
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.
Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)
How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd;
An aspic, each! and all, an hydra woe:
What strong Herculean virtue could suffice? —
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews;
And each tear mourns its own *distinct* distress;
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.
A grief like *this* proprietors excludes:
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;
They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs
Far as the fatal *Fame* can wing her way;

And turn the gayest thought of gayest age,
Down their right channel, through the vale of death.

The vale of death ! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,
Where *darkness*, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
(Dread day !) that interdicts all future change !
That subterranean world ! that land of ruin !
Fit walk, Lorenzo, for proud human thought !
There let my thought expatiate, and explore
Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,
Of all most wanted, and most welcome, *here*,
For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,
My soul ! " The fruits of dying friends survey ;
Expose the *vain* of life ; weigh life and death ;
Give death his eulogy ; thy fear subdue ;
And labour that first palm of noble minds,
A manly scorn of terror from the tomb."

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave.
As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood
Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flower ;
Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.
And *first*, of dying friends ; what fruit from these
It brings us more than triple aid ; an aid
To chase our *thoughtlessness*, *fear*, *pride*, and *guilt*.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainless ardours ; and abate
That glare of life which often blinds the wise.
Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth
Our rugged pass to death ; to break those bars
Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws
Cross our obstructed way ; and, thus to make
Welcome, as *safe*, our port from every storm.

Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume
Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,
Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,
And, damp't with omen of our own decease,
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
Just skim Earth's surface, ere we break it up,
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love ;
For us they languish, and for us they die :
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain ?
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts ?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft address ;
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer ?
Senseless, as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans ;
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths ?

Lorenzo ! no ; the thought of death indulge ;
Give it its wholesome empire ! let it reign,
That kind chastiser of thy soul in joy !
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast :
Auspicious era ! golden days, begin !
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.
And why not think on death ? Is life the theme
Of every thought ? and wish of every hour ?
And song of every joy ? Surprising truth !
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
To wave the numerous *ills* that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey ;
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,

His *luxuries* have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights ;
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless *present* chews the *past* ;
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
Have disinherited his future hours,
Which starve on *arts*, and *glean* their former field.

Live ever here, Lorenzo! — shocking thought !
So shocking, they who wish, disown it, too ;
Disown from shame, what they from folly crave.
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light ?
For what live ever here ? — With labouring step
To tread our former footsteps ? Pace the round
Eternal ? To climb life's worn, heavy wheel,
Which draws up nothing new ? To beat, and beat
The beaten track ? To bid each wretched day
The former mock ? To surfeit on the *same*,
And yawn our joys ? Or thank a misery
For change, though sad ? To see what we have seen ?
Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'd tale ?
To taste the tasted, and at each return
Less tasteful ? O'er our palates to decant
Another vintage ? Strain a fatter year,
Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone ?
Crazy machines to grind Earth's wasted fruits !
Ill-ground, and worse-concocted ! Load, not life !
The *rational* foul kennels of excess !
Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch !
Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the
bowl.

Such of our *fine-ones* is the wish refin'd !

So would they have it : elegant desire !
Why not invite the bellowing stalls, and wilds ?
But such examples might their riot awe.
Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,
(Though on *bright thought* they father all their
flights,)

To what are they reduc'd ? To love, and hate
The same vain world ; to censure, and espouse,
This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool
Each moment of each day ; to flatter bad
Through dread of worse ; to cling to this rude rock,
Barren, *to them*, of good, and sharp with ills,
And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,
And infamous for wrecks of human hope —
Scar'd at the gloomy gulf, that yawns beneath.
Such are their triumphs ! such their pangs of joy !

'T is time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.
This *hugg'd*, this *hideous* state, what art can cure ?
One only ; but that one, what all may reach ;
Virtue — she, wonder-working goddess ! charms
That *rock* to bloom ; and tames the *painted shrew* ;
And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo ! gives
To life's sick, nauseous *iteration*, change ;
And straitens Nature's circle to a line.
Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo ? lend an ear,
A patient ear, thou 'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden, iteration reigns,
And ever must, o'er those, whose joys are joys
Of sight, smell, taste : the cuckow-seasons sing
The same dull note to such as nothing prize,
But what those seasons, from the teeming Earth,
To doating *sense* indulge. But nobler minds,

Which relish fruits unripen'd by the Sun,
Make their days various ; various as the dyes
On the dove's neck, which wanton in *his* rays.
On minds of dove-like innocence possess,
On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing *old* revolves
In *that*, for which they long ; for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heavenly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise ;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, *new* strength, lustre, fame ;
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel
Rolling *beneath* their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour ;
Advancing *virtue*, in a line to *bliss* ;
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire !
And *bliss*, which Christian schemes alone ensure.
And shall we then, for Virtue's sake, commence
Apostates ; and turn infidels for joy ?
A truth it is, few doubt, but fewer trust,
" He sins against *this* life, who slights the *next*."
What is this life ? How few their favourite know !
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
By passionately loving life, we make
Lov'd life unlovely ; hugging her to death.
We give to time eternity's regard ;
And, dreaming, take our passage for our port.
Life has no value as an end, but means ;
An end deplorable ! a means divine !
When 't is our all, 't is nothing ! worse than nought ;
A nest of pains : when held as nothing, much :
Like some fair hum'rists, life is most enjoy'd,

When courted least ; most worth, when disesteem'd :
Then 't is the seat of comfort, rich in peace ;
In prospect richer far ; important ! awful !
Not to be mention'd, but with shouts of praise !
Not to be thought on, but with tides of joy !
The mighty basis of eternal bliss !
Where now the *barren rock* ? the *painted shrew* ?
Where now, Lorenzo ! life's *eternal round* ?
Have I not made my triple promise good ?
Vain is the world ; but only to the vain.
To what compare we then this varying scene,
Whose worth ambiguous rises, and declines ?
Waxes, and wanes ? (In all propitious, *night*
Assists me here) compare it to the Moon ;
Dark in herself, and indigent ; but rich
In *borrow'd* lustre from a higher sphere.
When gross guilt interposes, labouring Earth,
O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy ;
Her joys, at brightest, pallid, to that font
Of full effulgent glory, whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant : Oh Lorenzo !
A good man, and an angel ! these between
How thin the barrier ! what divides their fate ?
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year ;
Or, if an age, it is a moment still ;
A moment, or eternity 's forgot.
Then be, what once they were, who now are gods ;
Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass ?
The *soft transition* call it ; and be cheer'd :
Such it is often, and why not to thee ?
To hope the best, is pious, brave, and wise ;

And may itself *procure*, what it *presumes*.
Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd ;
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
“ *Strange competition !* ”—True, Lorenzo ! strange !
So little *life* can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust ;
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
Through chinks, styl'd organs, dim *life* peeps at
light ;

Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day ;
All eye, all ear, the disembodiy'd power.

Death has feign'd evils, *Nature* shall not feel ;

Life, ill substantial, *Wisdom* cannot shun.

Is not the mighty *Mind*, that son of Heaven ?

By tyrant *Life* dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd ?

By *Death* enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd ?

Death but entombs the body ; *life* the soul.

“ Is *Death* then guiltless ? How he marks his way
With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine !
Art, genius, fortune, elevated power !
With various lustres *these* light up the world,
Which *Death* puts out, and darkens human race.”

I grant, Lorenzo ! this indictment just :

The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror !

Death humbles these ; more barbarous *life*, the man.

Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay ;

Death, of the spirit infinite ! divine !

Death has no dread, but what frail *life* imparts ;

Nor *life* true joy, but what kind *death* improves.

No bliss has *life* to boast, till death can give

Far greater ; *life*'s a debtor to the grave,

Dark lattice ! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo ! blush at *fondness* for a *life*,
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
To cater for the sense ; and serve at boards,
Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps
Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.
Luxurious feast ! a soul, a soul immortal,
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd !
Lorenzo ! blush at *terror* for a *death*,

Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.
What need I more ? O *Death*, the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death ! thy dreaded harbingers,
Age, and *disease* ; disease, though long my guest ;
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life ;
Which, pluck'd a little more, will toll the bell,
That call my few friends to my funeral ;
Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
While Reason and Religion, better taught,
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory ;
It binds in chains the raging ills of life :

Lust and *ambition*, *wrath* and *avarice*,
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
Are not *immortal* too, O Death ! is thine.
Our day of dissolution ! — name it right ;
'T is our great pay-day ; 't is our harvest, rich
And ripe. What though the sickle, sometimes
keen,

Just scars us as we reap the golden grain ?
More than thy balm, O Gilead ! heals the wound.

Birth's feeble cry, and *Death's* deep dismal groan,
Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays
For mighty gain : the gain of each, of life !
But O ! the last the former so transcends,
Life dies, compar'd ; *life* lives beyond the grave.

And feel I, *Death* ! no joy from thought of thee ?
Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires
With every nobler thought, and fairer deed !
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man !
Death, the rewarder, who the rescued crowns !
Death, that absolves my birth ; a curse without it !
Rich *death*, that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes ; without it a chimera !
Death, of all pain the period, not of joy ;
Joy's *source*, and *subject*, still subsist unhurt :
One, in my soul ; and one, in her great Sire ;
Though the four winds were warring for my dust.
Yes, and from winds, and waves, and central night,
Though prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest
spheres,)

And live *entire*. *Death* is the crown of life :
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain ;
Were death denied, to live would not be life ;
Were death denied, e'en fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure : we fall ; we rise, we reign !
Spring from our fetters ; fasten in the skies ;
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight :
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death ?
When shall I *die* ? — When shall I live for ever ?

NIGHT THE FOURTH.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

*Containing our only Cure for the Fear of Death ; and
proper Sentiments of that inestimable Blessing.*

TO THE HONOURABLE MR. YORKE.

A MUCH-INDEBTED Muse, O Yorke ! intrudes.
Amid the smiles of fortune, and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a serious song. —
How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death ! I sing its sovereign cure.

Why start at Death ? Where is he ? Death arriv'd,

Is past ; not come or gone, he 's never *here*.
Ere *hope*, *sensation* fails ; black-boding man
Receives, not *suffers*, Death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave ;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm ;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Imagination's fool, and *error's* wretch,
Man makes a death, which Nature never made ;
Then on the point of his own fancy falls ;
And feels a thousand deaths, in fearing one.

But were death frightful, what has *age* to fear ?
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.
I scarce can meet a monument, but holds
My younger ; every date cries — " Come away."
And what recalls me ? Look the world around,

And tell me what: the wisest cannot tell.
Should any born of woman give his thought
Full range on just *dislike's* unbounded field;
Of things, the vanity; of men, the flaws;
Flaws in the *best*; the many, flaw all o'er;
As *leopards*, spotted, or, as *Ethiops*, dark;
Vivacious *ill*; good dying immature;
(How immature, *Narcissa's* marble tells!)
And at his death bequeathing endless pain;
His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,
And spend itself in sighs, for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant
To *lucky* life) some perquisites of joy;
A time there is, when, like a thrice-told tale,
Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,
But from our *comment* on the comedy,
Pleasing *reflections* on parts well sustain'd,
Or purpos'd *emendations* where we fail'd,
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,
When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
Toss *Fortune* back her tinsel, and her plume,
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me, that time is come; my world is dead;
A new world rises, and new manners reign:
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;
Nor that the worst: Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice),
My very master knows me not. —

Shall I dare say, peculiar is the fate ?
I've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.
An object ever pressing dims the sight,
And hides behind its ardour to be seen.
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great ;
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.
Refusal ! canst thou wear a smother form ?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme :
Who cheapens life, abates the *fear of death* :
Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
Court favour, yet untaken, I besiege ;
Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.
Alas ! ambition makes my little less ;
Embittering the possest. Why wish for more ?
Wishing, of all employments, is the worst ;
Philosophy's reverse ; and health's decay.
Were I as plump as stall'd theology,
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream,
Wishing is an expedient to be poor,
Wishing, that constant *hectic* of a fool ;
Caught at a court ; purg'd off by purer air,
And simpler diet ; gifts of rural life !

Blest be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
The world 's a stately bark, on dangerous seas,
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril ;
Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms :
And meditate on scenes, more silent still ;

Pursue my theme, and fight the *fear of death*.
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
Eager *ambition's* fiery chase I see ;
I see the circling hunt, of noisy men,
Burst law's enclosure, leap the mounds of right,
Pursuing, and pursued, each other's prey ;
As wolves, for rapine ; as the fox, for wiles ;
Till *Death*, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour ?
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame ?
Earth's highest station ends in, " Here he lies,"
And " Dust to dust " concludes her noblest song.
If this song lives, posterity shall know
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late ;
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
For future vacancies in church or state ;
Some avocation deeming it — to die,
Unbit by rage canine of *dying rich* ;
Guilt's blunder ! and the loudest laugh of Hell.

O my coëvals ! remnants of yourselves !
Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave !
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil ?
Shall our pale, wither'd hands, be still stretch'd out,
Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age ?
With avarice and convulsions, grasping hard ?
Grasping at air ! for what has Earth beside ?
Man wants but little ; nor that little, long :
How soon must he resign his very dust,

Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour !
Years *unexperienc'd* rush on numerous ills ;
And soon as man, *expert* from time, has found
The *key* of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,
And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,
Firmer in health and greener in their age,
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
I still survive ; and am I fond of life,
Who scarce can think it possible, I live ?
Alive by miracle ! or, what is next,
Alive by Mead ! if I am still alive,
Who long have buried what gives life to live,
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
Life's lee is not more *shallow* than *impure*
And *vapid* ; *sense* and *reason* show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbiter of life and death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun !
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
'The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence ; and could know
No motive, but my bliss ; and hast ordain'd
A rise in blessing ! with the *patriarch's* joy,
Thy call I follow to the land *unknown* ;
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust ;
Or life, or death, is equal ; neither weighs :
All weight in this — O let me live to thee !

Though *Nature's* terrors, *thus*, may be repress :
Still frowns grim *Death* ; guilt points the tyrant's
spear.

And whence all human guilt ? From death forgot.
Ah me ! too long I set at nought the swarm
Of friendly warnings, which around me flew ;
And smil'd, unsmitten : small my cause to smile !
Death's admonitions, like shafts upward shot,
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere
They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound ;
O think how deep, Lorenzo ! here it stings :
Who can appease its anguish ? how it burns !
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw ?
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb ?

With joy — with grief, that *healing hand* I see ;
Ah ! too conspicuous ! it is fix'd on high.
On *high* ? — What means my phrenzy ? I blaspheme ;
Alas ! how *low* ! how far beneath the skies !
The skies it form'd ; and now it bleeds for *me* —
But bleeds the balm I want — Yet still it *bleeds* ;
Draw the dire steel — ah no ! the dreadful blessing
What heart or can sustain, or dares forego !
There hangs all human hope ; that nail supports
The falling universe : that gone, we drop ;
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
Creation had been smother'd in her birth —
Darkness is his curtain, and his bed the dust ;
When stars and Sun are dust beneath his throne !
In Heaven itself can such indulgence dwell ?
O what a groan was there ! a groan *not his*.
He seiz'd our dreadful right ; the load sustain'd ;

Stern *justice* and soft-smiling *love* embrace,
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,
When seem'd its majesty to need support,
Or *that*, or *man*, inevitably lost ;
What, but the *fathomless* of thought divine,
Could labour such expedient from despair,
And rescue *both* ? both rescue ! both exalt !
O how are both exalted by the *deed* !
The wondrous deed ! or shall I call it *more* ?
A wonder in Omnipotence itself !
A mystery no less to gods than men !

Not *thus*, our infidels the Eternal draw,
A God all o'er, consummate, absolute,
Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete :
They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes ;
And, with one excellence, another wound ;
Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,
Bid *mercy* triumph over — God himself,
Undeified by their opprobrious praise :
A God *all* mercy, is a God unjust.

Ye brainless wits ! ye baptiz'd infidels !
Ye worse for mending ! wash'd to fouler stains !
The ransom was paid down ; the fund of Heaven,
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
Amazing, and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,
All price beyond : though curious to compute,
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum :
Its value vast, ungrasp'd by minds *create*,
For ever hides, and glows, in the *Supreme*.

And was the ransom paid ? it was : and paid
(What can exalt the bounty more ?) for *you* !
The Sun beheld it — no, the shocking scene

Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face ;
Not such as *this* ; not such as Nature makes ;
A *midnight* Nature shudder'd to behold ;
A *midnight* new ! a dread eclipse (without
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown !
Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain ? Or start
At that enormous load of human guilt, [cross ;
Which bow'd his blessed head ; o'erwhelmed his
Made groan the centre ; burst Earth's marble womb,
With pangs, strange pangs ! deliver'd of her dead ?
Hell howl'd ; and Heaven that hour let fall a tear ;
Heaven wept, that men might smile ! Heaven bled,
that man

Might never die ! —

And is devotion virtue ? 'T is *compell'd*.
What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?
Such contemplations mount us ; and should mount
The mind still higher ; nor ever glance on man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd. — Where roll my thoughts
To rest from wonders ? other wonders rise ;
And strike where'er they roll : my soul is caught :
Heaven's sovereign blessings, clustering from the
cross,

Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,
The prisoner of amaze ! — in his blest *life*
I see the *path*, and in his *death* the *price*,
And in his great *ascent* the *proof* supreme
Of immortality. — And did he rise ?
Hear, O ye nations ! hear it, O ye dead !
He rose ! he rose ! he burst the bars of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates !
And give the King of glory to come in.

Who is the King of glory? he who left
His throne of glory, for the pang of death!
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who slew
The ravenous foe, that gorg'd all human race!
The King of glory, he, whose glory fill'd
Heaven with amazement at his love to man;
And with divine complacency beheld
Powers most illumin'd, wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall *man* sustain?
Oh the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd
throne! [Heaven!

Last gasp! of vanquish'd Death. Shout Earth and
This *sum of good* to man. *Whose* nature, then,
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!
Then, then, I rose; then first *humanity*
Triumphant pass'd the crystal ports of light,
(Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,
Seiz'd in *our* name. E'er since, 't is blasphemous
To call man mortal. Man's mortality [ration
Was, then, transferr'd to death; and Heaven's du-
Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,
This child of dust — Man, all immortal! hail;
Hail, Heaven! all lavish of strange gifts to man!
Thine all the glory; man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
On Christian joy's exulting wing, above
Th' Aonian mount? Alas! small cause for joy!
What if to pain immortal? if extent
Of being, to preclude a close of woe?
Where, then, my boast of immortality?

I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt ;
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd,
'T is guilt alone can justify his death !
Nor that, unless his death can justify
Relenting guilt in Heaven's indulgent sight.
If, sick of folly, I relent ; he writes
My name in Heaven, with that inverted spear
(A spear deep-dipt in blood !) which pierc'd his side,
And open'd there a font for all mankind,
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink, and live:
This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is *this* ? — Survey the wondrous cure :
And at each step, let higher wonder rise !
“ Pardon for infinite offence ! and pardon
Through means that speak its value infinite !
A pardon bought with blood ! with blood divine !
With blood divine of him I made my foe !
Persisted to provoke ! though woo'd, and aw'd,
Blest, and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still !
A rebel, 'midst the thunders of his throne !
Nor I alone ! a rebel universe !
My species up in arms ! not one exempt !
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,
Most joy'd, for the redeem'd from deepest guilt !
As if our race were held of highest rank ;
And godhead dearer, as more kind to man ! ”

Bound, every heart ! and every bosom, burn !
O what a scale of miracles is here !
Its lowest round, high planted on the skies ;
Its towering summit lost beyond the thought
Of man or angel ! O that I could climb
The wonderful ascent, with equal praise !

Praise! flow for ever (if astonishment
Will give thee leave :) my praise ! for ever flow ;
Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heaven
More fragrant, than Arabia sacrific'd,
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heaven, shall *praise* descend,
With her soft plume (from *plausive* angel's wing
First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,
Thus diving in the pockets of the great ?
Is *praise* the perquisite of every paw,
Though black as Hell, that grapples well for gold ?
Oh love of gold ! thou meanest of amours !
Shall *praise* her odours waste on virtue's dead,
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,
A scavenger in *scenes*, where *vacant* posts,
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
Their future ornaments ? From courts and thrones,
Return, apostate *Praise* ! thou vagabond !
Thou prostitute ! to thy first love return,
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme.

There flow redundant ; like Meander flow,
Back to thy fountain ; to that Parent Power,
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,
The soul to *be*. Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow
In mutual awe profound of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt ; and turn their back on thee,
Great Sire ! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing :
To prostrate angels, an amazing scene !
O the presumption of man's awe for man !

Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!
Thine, all; day thine, and thine this gloom of *night*,
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds:
What, night eternal, but a frown from thee?
What, Heaven's meridian glory, but thy smile?
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise?
While Heaven's high host on *hallelujahs* live?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe
My soul in praise to him, who gave my soul,
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of Hell, *great love!* by thee,
O most adorable! most unador'd!
Where shall thy praise begin, which ne'er should
end?

Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause!
How is *night's* sable mantle labour'd o'er,
How richly wrought with attributes divine! [pomp,
What *wisdom* shines! what *love!* this midnight
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlay'd!
Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;
For others this profusion: thou, apart,
Above! beyond! O tell me, mighty Mind!
Where art thou? Shall I dive into the *deep*?
Call to the *Sun*, or ask the roaring *winds*,
For their Creator! Shall I question loud
The *thunder*, if in that th' Almighty dwells?
Or holds he furious *storms* in straiten'd reins,
And bids fierce *whirlwinds* wheel his rapid car?
What mean these questions? Trembling, I retract;
My prostrate soul adores the *present* God:
Praise I a distant deity? He tunes
My voice (if tun'd); the nerve, that writes, sustains:

Wrapt in his being, I resound his praise :
But though past *all* diffus'd, without a shore,
His essence ; *local* is his throne, (as meet,)
To gather the disperst, (as standards call
The listed from afar) : to fix a point,
A central point, collective of his sons,
Since *finite* every nature but his own.

The nameless *He*, whose nod is *Nature's* birth ;
And *Nature's* shield, the shadow of his hand ;
Her dissolution, his suspended smile !
The great *First-Last* / pavilion'd high he sits,
In darkness from excessive splendour borne,
By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost.
His glory, to created glory, bright,
As that to central horrors ; he looks down
On all that soars ; and spans immensity.

Though *night* unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
Boundless creation ! what art thou ? A beam,
A mere effluvium of his majesty :
And shall an atom of this atom-world
Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of Heaven ?
Down to the centre should I send my thought
Through beds of glittering ore, and glowing gems,
Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay ;
Goes out in darkness : if, on towering wing,
I send it through the boundless vault of stars !
The stars, though rich, what dross their gold to *thee*,
Great ! good ! wise ! wonderful ! eternal King !
If to those *conscious stars* thy throne around,
Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss ;
And ask their strain ; they want it, *more* they want,
Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,

Languid their energy, their ardour cold,
Indebted still, their highest rapture burns ;
Short of its mark, defective, though divine. [alone ;
Still more — This theme is man's, and man's
Their vast appointments reach it not : they see
On Earth a bounty not indulg'd on high ;
And *downward* look for Heaven's superior praise !
First born of ether ! high in fields of light !
View man, to see the glory of your God !
Could angels envy, they had envied *here* ;
And some *did* envy ; and the rest, though gods,
Yet still gods *unredeem'd*, (there triumphs man,
Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies,)
They less would *feel*, though more adorn, my theme.
They sung *Creation* (for in that they shar'd):
How rose in melody, that child of love !
Creation's great superior, man ! is thine ;
Thine is *redemption* ; they just gave the key :
'T is thine to raise, and eternize, the song ;
Though human, yet divine : for should not *this*
Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs *here* ?
Redemption ! 't was creation more sublime ;
Redemption ! 't was the labour of the skies ;
Far more than labour — It was *death* in Heaven.
A truth so strange ! 't were bold to think it true ;
If not far bolder still to disbelieve !
Here pause, and ponder : was there death in
Heaven ?
What then on Earth ? On Earth, which struck the
blow ?
Who struck it ? Who ? — O how is *man* enlarg'd
Seen through this medium ! how the pigmy towers !

How counterpois'd his origin from dust !
How counterpois'd, to dust his sad return !
How voided his vast distance from the skies !
How near he presses on the seraph's wing !
Which is the seraph ? Which the born of clay ?
How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud
Of guilt, and clay condens'd, the son of Heaven !
The *double* son ; the made, and the re-made !
And shall Heaven's double property be lost ?
Man's double madness only can destroy.
To man the bleeding cross has promis'd *all* ;
The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace ;
Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny ?
O ye ! who, from this *rock of ages*, leap,
Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep !
What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,
Our interest in the master of the storm .
Cling *there*, and in wreck'd Nature's ruin *smile* ;
While vile apostates *tremble* in a calm.

Man ! know thyself. All wisdom centres there :
To none man seems ignoble, but to man ;
Angels that *grandeur*, men o'erlook, admire :
How long shall human nature be *their* book,
Degenerate mortal ! and *unread* by thee ?
The beam dim *reason* sheds shows wonders there ;
What high contents ! Illustrious faculties !
But the grand *comment*, which displays at full
Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,
By Heaven compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
An awful stranger, a terrestrial god ?

A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high attribute, immortal life ?
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm :
I gaze, and, as I gaze, my mounting soul
Catches strange fire, Eternity ! at thee ;
And drops the world — or rather, more enjoys :
How chang'd the face of Nature ! how improv'd !
What seem'd a chaos, shines a glorious world,
Or, what a world, an Eden ; heighten'd all !
It is another scene ! another self !
And still another, as time rolls along ;
And that a *self* far more illustrious still.
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
Unpierc'd by bold conjecture's keenest ray,
What evolutions of surprising fate !
How Nature opens, and receives my soul
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought ! where gods
Encounter and embrace me ! What new births
Of strange adventure, foreign to the Sun ;
Where what now charms, perhaps, whate'er exists,
Old *time*, and fair *creation*, are forgot !

Is this extravagant ? Of man we form
Extravagant conception, to be just :
Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him :
Beyond its reach, the Godhead only, more.
He, the great Father ! kindled at one flame
The world of rationals ; one spirit pour'd
From spirit's awful fountain : pour'd himself
Through all their souls ; but not in equal stream,
Profuse, or frugal, of th' aspiring God,
As his wise plan demanded ; and when past
Their various trials in their various spheres,

If they *continue* rational, as made,
Resorbs them all into himself again ;
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.

Why doubt we, then, the *glorious truth* to sing,
Though yet *unsung*, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold ?
Angels are men of a superior kind ;
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ;
And men are angels loaded for an hour,
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.
Angels their *fallings*, mortals have their praise ;
While *here*, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,
And summon'd to the *glorious standard* soon,
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.
Nor are our *brothers* thoughtless of their kin,
Yet absent ; but not absent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles ; Raphael sung
Our triumphs ; Gabriel on our errands flown,
Sent by the Sovereign : and are these, O man !
Thy friends, thy warm allies ? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder !) rival to the brute ?

Religion 's All. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess, in her left,
Holds out *this* world, and, in her right, the *next* ;
Religion ! the sole voucher man is man ;
Supporter sole of man above himself ;
E'en in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
Religion ! Providence ! an after-state !
Here is firm footing ; *here* is solid rock !
This can support us ; all is sea besides ;

Sinks under us ; bestorms, and then devours.
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids Earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick, polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocation-damps,
And dungeon-horrours, by kind fate, discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load :
As if new-born, he triumphs in the change ;
So joys the soul, when, from inglorious aims,
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
Of ties terrestrial, set at large, she mounts
To *reason's* region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion ! thou the soul of happiness ;
And, groaning Calvary, of thee ! *There* shine
The noblest truths ; *there* strongest motives sting ;
There sacred violence assaults the soul ;
There, nothing but *compulsion* is forborne.
Can love allure us ? or can terroure awe ?
He weeps ! — the falling drop puts out the Sun ;
He sighs — the sigh Earth's deep foundation shakes.
If in his love so terrible, what then
His wrath inflam'd ? his tenderness on fire ?
Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires ?
Can prayer, can praise, avert it ? — Thou, my *All !*
My theme ! my inspiration ! and my crown !
My strength in age ! my rise in low estate !
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth ! — my world .
My light in darkness ! and my life in death !
My boast through time ! bliss through eternity !

Eternity, too short to speak thy praise !
Or fathom thy profound of love to man !
To man, of men the meanest, e'en to me ;
My sacrifice ! my God ! — what things are these !
What then art thou ? by what name shall I call
thee ?

Knew I the name devout archangels use,
Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
By me unrivall'd ; thousands more sublime,
None half so dear, as that, which, though unspoke,
Still glows at heart : O how omnipotence
Is lost in love ! Thou great philanthropist !
Father of angels ! but the friend of man !
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born !
Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood !
How art thou pleas'd, by bounty to distress !
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth ! to favour, and confound !
To challenge, and to distance all return !
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
And leave praise panting in the distant vale !
Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due ;
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.
But since the naked *will* obtains thy smile,
Beneath this monument of praise *unpaid*,
And future life symphonious to my strain,
(That noblest hymn to Heaven !) for ever lie
Intomb'd my *fear of death* ! and every fear,
The dread of every evil, but thy frown.

Whom see I, yonder, so demurely smile ?
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.

Ye quietists, in homage to the skies !
Serene ! of soft address ! who mildly make
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,
Abhorring violence ; who *halt* indeed ;
But, for the blessing, *wrestle* not with Heaven !
Think you my song too turbulent ? too warm ?
Are *passions*, then, the pagans of the soul ?
Reason alone baptiz'd ? alone *ordain'd*
To touch things sacred ? Oh for warmer still !
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my powers :
Oh for an humbler heart ! and prouder song !
Thou, my much-injur'd theme ! with that soft eye
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look
Compassion to the coldness of my breast ;
And pardon to the winter in my strain.

Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, formalists !
On such a theme, 't is impious to be calm ;
Passion is reason, transport temper, *here*.
Shall Heaven, which gave us ardour, and has shown
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
What smooth emollients in theology,
Recumbent virtue's downy doctors, preach ;
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise ?
Rise odours sweet from incense *uninflam'd* ?
Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout ;
But when it glows, its heat is struck to Heaven ;
To human hearts her golden harps are strung ;
High Heaven's *orchestra* chaunts *amen* to man.

Hear I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,
Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of Heaven,
Soft-wafted on celestial *fity's* plume,
Through the vast spaces of the universe,

To cheer me in this melancholy gloom ?
Oh when will *Death* (now stingless), like a friend,
Admit me of their choir ? O when will *Death*
This mouldering, old, partition-wall throw down ?
Give beings, one in nature, one abode ?
Oh *Death* divine ! that giv'st us to the skies !
Great *future* ! glorious patron of the *past*,
And *present* ! when shall I thy shrine adore ?
From Nature's *continent*, immensely wide,
Immensely blest, this little *isle of life*,
This dark, incarcerated *colony*,
Divides us. Happy day ! that breaks our chain ;
That manumits ; that calls from exile home ;
That leads to Nature's great *metropolis*,
And re-admits us, through the *guardian* hand
Of elder brothers, to our *Father's* throne ;
Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds
Beholding man, allows *that* tender name.
'T is this makes *Christian triumph* a command :
'T is this makes joy a *duty* to the wise ;
'T is impious in a good man to be sad.

See thou, Lorenzo ! where hangs all our hope ?
Touch'd by the *cross*, we live ; or, *more* than die ;
That *touch* which touch'd not angels ; more divine
Than that which touch'd confusion into form,
And darkness into glory : partial *touch* !
Ineffably pre-eminent regard !
Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
From Heaven through all duration, and supports
In one illustrious and amazing plan,
Thy welfare, *Nature* ! and thy God's renown ;

*That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul
Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
Turns Earth to Heaven, to heavenly thrones trans-
forms*

The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb.

Dost ask me when? When he who died returns;
Returns, how chang'd! Where then the man of
woe?

In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns;
And all his courts, exhausted by the tide
Of deities, triumphant in his train,
Leave a stupendous solitude in Heaven;
Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
Of pomp, and multitude; a radiant band
Of angels new; of angels from the tomb.

Is this my fancy thrown remote? and rise
Dark doubts between the promise and event?
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;
Nature is *Christian*; preaches to mankind;
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?
Th' illustrious stranger, passing, terror sheds
On gazing nations; from his fiery train
Of length enormous, takes his ample round
Through depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds,
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide
Heaven's mighty cape; and then revisits Earth,
From the long travel of a thousand years.
Thus, at the destin'd period, shall return
He, once on Earth, who bids the comet blaze:
And, with him, all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point ;
Or hope precarious in low whisper breathes ;
Faith speaks aloud, distinct ; e'en *adders* hear :
But turn, and dart into the dark again.
Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of Death,
To break the shock blind *Nature* cannot shun,
And lands thought smoothly on the further shore.
Death's terrour is the mountain *faith* removes ;
That mountain barrier between man and peace.
'T is *faith* disarms destruction ; and absolves
From every clamorous charge, the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve ? Lorenzo ! — “ *Reason* bids,
All-sacred reason.” — Hold her sacred still ;
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame :
All-sacred *reason* ! source, and soul, of all
Demanding praise, on Earth, or Earth above !
My heart is thine : deep in its inmost folds,
Live thou with life ; live dearer of the two.
Wear I the blessed cross, by fortune stamp'd
On passive Nature, before thought was born ?
My birth's blind bigot ! fir'd with *local* zeal !
No ! *Reason* re-baptis'd me when adult ;
Weigh'd true, and false, in her impartial scale ;
My heart became the convert of my head,
And made that choice, which once was but my fate.
“ On argument alone my faith is built : ”
Reason pursu'd is *faith* ; and unpursued
Where proof invites, 't is reason, then, no more :
And such our *proof*, That, or our *faith* is *right*,
Or *Reason* lies, and Heaven design'd it *wrong* :
Absolve we this ? What, then, is blasphemy ?

Fond as we are, and justly fond, of *faith*,

Reason, we grant, demands our first regard ;
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.
Reason the root, fair *faith* is but the flower ;
The fading flower shall die ; but *reason* lives
Immortal, as her Father in the skies.
When *faith* is virtue, *reason* makes it so.
Wrong not the Christian ; think not *reason yours* :
'T is *reason* our great Master holds so dear ;
'T is *reason's* injur'd rights his wrath resents ;
'T is *reason's* voice obey'd his glories crown ;
To give lost *reason* life, he pour'd his own :
Believe, and show the reason of a man ;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God !
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb :
Through *reason's* wounds alone thy *faith* can die ;
Which dying, tenfold terrour gives to death,
And dips in *venom* his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud *pæans*, due
To those, who push our *antidote* aside ;
Those boasted friends to *reason*, and to *man*
Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
Death's terrour heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.
These pompous sons of *reason* idoliz'd
And vilified at once ; of *reason* dead,
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old ;
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow ?
While *love of truth* through all their camp resound,
They draw *Pride's* curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
Spike up their inch of reason, on the point
Of philosophic wit, call'd argument ;
And then, exulting in their taper, cry,
" Behold the Sun : " and, Indian-like, adore.

Talk they of *morals*? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou maker of *new* morals to mankind!
The *grand* morality is love of thee.
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,
(Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown,) *As wise as* Socrates, might justly stand
The definition of a modern fool.

A Christian is the highest style of man :
And is there, who the blessed cross wipes off,
As a foul blot from his dishonour'd brow ?
If angels tremble, 't is at such a sight :
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,
More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell ?

Ye sold to sense ! ye citizens of Earth !
(For such alone the Christian banner fly)
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain ?
Behold the picture of Earth's happiest man :
" He calls his wish, it comes ; he sends it back,
And says, he call'd another ; that arrives,
Meets the same welcome ; yet he still calls on ;
Till *one* calls him, who varies not his call,
But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,
Till Nature dies, and judgment sets him free ;
A freedom far less welcome than his chain."

But grant man happy ; grant him happy long :
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour ;
That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,
That, like a post, comes on in full career :
How swift the shuttle flies, that weaves thy shroud !
Where is the fable of thy former years ?
Thrown down the gulf of time ; as far from thee
As they had ne'er been thine ; the day in hand,

Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going ;
Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 't is gone ;
And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd
By strides as swift ; Eternity is all ;
And whose Eternity ? Who triumphs there ?
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss !
For ever basking in the Deity !

Lorenzo ! who ? — Thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak ; 't will speak ere long,
Thy leave unask'd : Lorenzo ! hear it now,
While useful its advice, its accent mild.
By the great edict, the divine decree,
Truth is deposited with man's *last hour* ;
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust :
Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity ;
Truth, of his council, when he made the worlds ;
Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made ;
Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
That Heaven-commissioned hour no sooner calls,
But, from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
Like him they fable under *Ætna* whelm'd,
The goddess bursts, in thunder, and in flame ;
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.
Dark *demons* I discharge, and hydra stings ;
The keen vibration of bright *truth* — is Hell :
Just definition ! though by schools untaught.
Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this parson'd page,
And trust, for once, a prophet, and a priest ;
“ Men may *live* fools, but fools they cannot *die*.”

NIGHT THE FIFTH.

THE RELAPSE.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

LORENZO ! to recriminate is just.
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who sought no more.

As just thy *second charge*. I grant the *Muse*
Has often blush'd at her degenerate sons,
Retain'd by *sense* to plead her filthy cause ;
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
And subtilize the gross into refin'd :
As if to magic numbers' powerful charm
'T was given, to make a *civet* of their song
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause,
We wear the chains of *pleasure* and of *pride*.
These share the man ; and these distract him too ;
Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.
Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars,
But *pleasure*, lark-like, nests upon the ground.
Joys shar'd by brute-creation, *pride* resents ;
Pleasure embraces : man would *both* enjoy,
And both at *once* : a point how hard to gain !
But, what can't wit, when stung by strong desire :

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise.
Since joys of *sense* can't rise to *reason's* taste ;
In subtle *sophistry's* laborious forge,

Wit hammers out a reason *new*, that stoops
To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.
Wit calls the *graces* the chaste zone to loose;
Nor less than a *plump* god to fill the bowl:
A thousand phantoms, and a thousand spells,
A thousand opiates scatters, to delude,
To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,
And the fool'd mind delightfully confound. [more;
Thus that which shock'd the *judgment*, shocks no
That which gave *pride* offence, no more offends.
Pleasure and *pride*, by nature mortal foes,
At war eternal, which in man shall reign,
By *wit's* address, patch up a fatal peace,
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,
From rank, refin'd to delicate and gay.
Art, cursed art! wipes off th' indebted blush
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every shame.
Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,
And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,
These *sensual ethics* far, in bulk, transcend.
The flowers of eloquence, profusely pour'd
O'er spotted vice, fill half the letter'd world.
Can powers of genius exorcise their page,
And consecrate enormities with song?
But let not these inexpiable strains
Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity;
Nor meanly stops at *time*, but holds the world
As 't is, in Nature's ample field, a point,
A point in her esteem; from whence to start,
And run the round of universal space,
To visit being universal there,

And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind !
Yet, spite of this so vast circumference,
Well knows, but what is *moral*, nought is *great*.
Sing *syrens* only? Do not angels sing?
There is in *poesy* a decent pride,
Which well becomes her when she speaks to *prose*,
Her younger sister ; haply, not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo ! to find pastimes here?
No guilty passion blown into a flame,
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,
No fairy field of fiction, all on flower,
No rainbow colours, *here*, or silken tale :
But solemn *counsels*, images of awe,
Truths, which eternity lets fall on man [spheres,
With double weight, through these revolving
This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade :
Thoughts, such as shall revisit your last hour ;
Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires ;
And thy dark pencil, *midnight* ! darker still
In melancholy dipt, embrowns the whole.

Yet this, even *this*, my laughter-loving friends !
Lorenzo ! and thy brothers of the smile !
If, what imports you most, can most engage,
Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.
Or if you fail me, know, the wise shall taste
The truths I sing ; the truths I sing shall feel ;
And, feeling, give assent ; and their assent
Is ample recompense ; is more than praise.
But chiefly thine, O Litchfield ! nor mistake ;
Think not un introduc'd I force my way ;
Narcissa, not unknown, not unallied,
By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth !

To thee, from blooming *amaranthine* bowers,
Where all the language *harmony*, descends
Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse :
A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise ;
Thy praise she drops, by *nobler* still inspir'd.

O thou ! Blest Spirit ! *whether* the supreme,
Great antemundane Father ! in whose breast
Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,
And all its various revolutions roll'd
Present, though future ; prior to themselves ;
Whose breath can blow it into nought again ;
Or, from his throne some delegated power,
Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
From vain and vile, to solid and sublime !
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
And fuller of the god, than that which burst
From fam'd Castalia : nor is yet allay'd
My sacred thirst ; though long my soul has rang'd
Through pleasing paths of *moral* and *divine*,
By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

By *them* best lighted are the paths of *thought* ;
Nights are their *days*, their most illumin'd hours.
By *day*, the soul, o'erborne by life's career,
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
By *day* the soul is passive, all her thoughts
Impos'd, precarious, broken ere mature.
By *night*, from objects free, from passion cool,
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births
Of pure election, arbitrary range,
Not to the limits of *one* world confin'd ;

But from *ethereal* travels light on *Earth*,
As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the Sun adore :

Darkness has more divinity for me ;
It strikes thought inward ; it drives back the soul
To settle on herself, our point supreme !

There lies our theatre ! *there* sits our judge.

Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene ;

'T is the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out

'Twixt man and vanity ; 't is *reason's* reign,

And *virtue's* too ; these tutelary shades

Are man's *anylum* from the tainted throng.

Night is the good man's *friend*, and *guardian* too ;

It no less *rescues* virtue, than *inspires*.

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,

Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,

Nor touches on the world, without a stain :

The world 's infectious ; few bring back at eve,

Immaculate, the manners of the morn.

Something we *thought*, is blotted ! we *resolv'd*,

Is shaken ; we *renounc'd*, returns again.

Each *salutation* may slide in a sin

Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.

Nor is it strange : *light*, *motion*, *concourse*, *noise*,

All, scatter us abroad ; thought outward-bound,

Neglectful of our home affairs, flies off

In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,

And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,

And acts with *double* force, by few repell'd.

Ambition fires ambition ; *love of gain*

Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast ;
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe ;
And *inhumanity* is caught from man,
From smiling man. A slight, a single glance,
And shot at random, often has brought home
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart,
Of *envy, rancour, or impure desire*.
We see, we hear, with peril ; *safety* dwells
Remote from *multitude* ; the world 's a school
Of *wrong*, and what proficients swarm around !
We must or imitate, or disapprove ;
Must list as their accomplices, or foes ;
That stains our innocence ; *this* wounds our peace.
From Nature's birth, hence, *wisdom* has been smit
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade.

This sacred shade, and solitude, what is it ?

'T is the felt presence of the Deity.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone,
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
And looks, like other objects, black by night.
By night an atheist half-believes a God.

Night is fair, virtue's immemorial friend ;
The conscious Moon, through every distant age,
Has held a lamp to *wisdom*, and let fall,
On *contemplation's* eye, her purging ray.
The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from Heaven
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
His labouring mind, the stars in silence slide,
And seem all gazing on their future quest.
See him soliciting his ardent suit

In *private* audience : all the live-long night,
Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands;
Nor quits his theme, or posture, till the Sun
(Rude drunkard rising rosy from the main!)
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
And gives him to the tumult of the world. [waste
Hail, precious moments! stol'n from the black
Of murder'd time! Auspicious *midnight*! hail!
The world excluded, every passion hush'd,
And open'd a calm intercourse with Heaven,
Here the soul sits in council; ponders *past*,
Predestines *future* action; sees, not feels,
Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm:
All her lies answers, and *thinks* down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!

I am not pent in darkness; rather say,
(If not too bold,) in darkness I'm embower'd.
Delightful gloom! the clustering thoughts around
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;
But droop by day, and sicken in the *sun*.
Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that *first* fire,
Fountain of animation! whence descends
Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns
Nightly to visit me, so mean; and *now*,
Conscious how needful discipline to man,
From pleasing dalliance with the charms of *night*
My wandering thought recalls, to what excites
Far other beat of heart! Narcissa's tomb!
Or is it feeble Nature calls me back,
And breaks my spirit into grief again?
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?
A cold, slow puddle, creeping through my veins?

Or is it thus with all men? — Thus with all.
What are we? How unequal! Now we soar,
And now we sink: to be the *same*, transcends
Our present prowess. Dearly pays the *soul*
For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds
The blush of weakness to the bane of woe.
The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate,
In this damp, dusty region, charg'd with storms,
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;
Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall.
Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;
And not to *yield*, though *beaten*, all our praise.

'T is vain to seek in men for more than man.
Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,
Experience damps our triumph. I who late,
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
Where *grief* detain'd me prisoner, mounting high,
Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,
And call'd mankind to glory, shook off *pain*,
Mortality shook off, in ether pure,
And struck the stars; *now* feel my spirits fail
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,
Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,
In sorrow drown'd — but not in sorrow lost.
How wretched is the man who never mourn'd!
I dive for precious pearl in *sorrow's* stream:
Not so the thoughtless man that *only* grieves,
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain
(Inestimable gain!) and gives Heaven leave
To make him but more wretched, not more wise.
If wisdom is our lesson (and what else

Ennobles man? what else have angels learnt?)
Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,
Than *genius*, or *proud learning*, e'er could boast.
Voracious learning, often over-fed,
Digests not into sense her motley meal.
This *book-case*, with dark booty almost burst,
This *forager* on others' wisdom, leaves
Her native farm, her *reason*, quite untill'd.
With mixt manure she surfeits the rank soil,
Dung'd, but not dress'd; and rich to beggary.
A pomp untameable of weeds prevails.
Her *servant's* wealth, encumber'd *wisdom* mourns.

And what says *genius*? "*Let the dull be wise.*"
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong;
And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.
It pleads exemption from the laws of *sense*;
Considers *reason* as a leveller;
And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.
That wise it *could* be, thinks an ample claim
To *glory*, and to *pleasure* gives the rest.
Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.
Wisdom less shudders at a fool, than wit.

But *wisdom* smiles, when humbled mortals weep.
When *sorrow* wounds the breast, as ploughs the
glebe,

And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower;
Her seed celestial, then, glad *wisdom* sows;
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
If so, Narcissa! welcome my *Relapse*;
I'll raise a tax on my calamity,
And reap rich compensation from my pain.
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field;

And gather every thought of sovereign power
To chase the moral maladies of man ;
Thoughts, which may bear transplanting to the skies,
Though natives of this coarse penurious soil :
Nor wholly wither *there*, where *seraphs* sing,
Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in Heaven.
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
In either clime, though more illustrious *there*.
These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb ;
And, peradventure, of no fading flowers.

Say on what themes shall puzzled choice descend ?
“ Th' importance of contemplating the tomb ;
Why men decline it ; *suicide's* foul birth ;
The various *kind of grief* ; the *faults of age* ;
And *death's dread character* — invite my song.”

And, first, th' importance of our end survey'd.
Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief :
Mistaken kindness ! our hearts heal *too soon*.
Are *they* more kind than *he*, who struck the blow ?
Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,
And banish peace, till *nobler guests* arrive,
And bring it back, a true and endless peace ?
Calamities are *friends* : as glaring *day*
Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight ;
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
Of import high, and light divine, to man.

The man how blest, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves !)
Is led by choice to take his favourite walk,
Beneath *death's* gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
Unpierc'd by vanity's fantastic ray ;

To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs !
Lorenzo ! read with me Narcissa's stone ;
(Narcissa was thy favourite !) let us read
Her *moral* stone ! few doctors preach so well ;
Few orators so tenderly can touch
The feeling heart. What *pathos* in the *date* !
Apt words can strike : and yet in them we see
Faint images of what we, *here*, enjoy.
What cause have *we* to build on length of life ?
Temptations seize, when *fear* is laid asleep ;
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humbler shrine,
Truth, radiant goddess ! sallies on my soul,
And puts *Delusion*'s dusky train to flight ;
Dispels the mists our sultry *passions* raise,
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene :
And shows the *real* estimate of things ;
Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw ;
Pulls off the veil from *Virtue*'s rising charms ;
Detects *Temptation* in a thousand lies.
Truth bids me look on men, as *autumn* leaves,
And all they bleed for, as the summer's dust,
Driven by the whirlwind : lighted by her beams,
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
See things invisible, feel things remote,
Am present with futurities ; think nought
To man so foreign, as the joys *possess* ;
Nought so much his, as those beyond the grave.

No *folly* keeps its colour in *her* sight ;
Pale *worldly wisdom* loses all her charms ;
In pompous promise, from her schemes profound,

If future fate she plans, 't is all in leaves,
Like Sibyl, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss !
At the first blast it vanishes in air.
Not so, *celestial* : wouldst thou know, Lorenzo !
How differ *worldly wisdom*, and *divine* ?
Just as the waning, and the waxing Moon.
More empty *worldly wisdom* every day ;
And every day more fair her *rival* shines.
When *later*, there 's less time to play the fool.
Soon our whole term for wisdom is expir'd :
(Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave :)
And everlasting fool is writ in fire,
Or *real wisdom* wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble Sibyls' leaves,
The good man's days to Sibyls' books compare,
(In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale ;)
In price still rising, as in number less,
Inestimable quite his final hour.
For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones ;
Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.
" Oh let me die his death ! " all Nature cries.
" Then live his life. " — All Nature falters there.
Our great physician daily to consult,
To commune with the *grave*, our only cure.

What grave prescribes the best ? — A friend's ;
and yet,

From a friend's grave how soon we disengage !
E'en to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
Why are friends ravisht from us ? 'T is to bind,
By soft *affection's* ties, on human hearts,
The thought of death, which *reason*, too supine,
Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens *there*.

Nor reason, nor affection, no, nor both
Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
Behold, th' inexorable hour at hand !
Behold, th' inexorable hour forgot !
And to forget it, the chief *aim* of life,
Though well to ponder it, is life's chief *end*.

Is Death, that ever-threatening, ne'er remote,
That all-important, and that only sure,
(Come when he will) an unexpected guest ?
Nay, though invited by the loudest calls
Of blind *imprudence*, unexpected still ?
Though numerous messengers are sent before,
To warn his great arrival. What the cause,
The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill ?
All Heaven looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it, that life has sown her *joys* so thick,
We can't thrust in a single care between ?
Is it, that life has such a swarm of *cares*,
The thought of death can't enter for the throng ?
Is it, that *time* steals on with downy feet,
Nor wakes *indulgence* from her golden dream ?
To-day is so like *yesterday*, it cheats ;
We take the lying sister for the same.
Life glides away, Lorenzo ! like a brook ;
For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.
In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice :
To the same life none ever twice awoke.
We call the brook the same ; the same we think
Our life, though still more rapid in its flow ;
Nor mark the *much*, irrevocably laps'd,
And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say
(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)

That life is like a vessel on the stream?
In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
Of *time* descend, but not on *time* intent;
Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave;
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
We start, awake, look out; what see we there?
Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause *death* flies all human thought?
Or is it *judgment*, by the *will* struck blind,
That domineering mistress of the soul!
Like *him* so strong, by Dalilah the fair?
Or is it *fear* turns startled *reason* back,
From looking down a precipice so steep?
'T is dreadful; and the dread is wisely plac'd,
By Nature, conscious of the make of man.
A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,
A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.
By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour,
The *good-man* would repine; would *suffer* joys,
And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.
The *bad*, on each punctilious pique of pride,
Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein;
Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
And mar the schemes of Providence below.

What groan was that, Lorenzo? — Furies! rise,
And drown in your less execrable yell
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,
Blasted from Hell, with horrid lust of death.
Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
So call'd, so thought — And *then* he fled the field.
Less base the fear of death, than fear of life.

O Britain, infamous for suicide !
An *island* in thy manners, far disjoin'd
From the whole world of *rational*s beside !
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.
But thou be shock'd, while I detect the cause
Of *self-assault*, expose the monster's birth,
And bid *abhorrence* hiss it round the world.
Blame not thy *clime*, nor chide the distant Sun ;
The Sun is innocent, thy *clime* absolv'd :
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.
The cause I sing, in Eden might prevail,
And proves, it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow,
Who names his *soul*), a native of the skies !
High-born, and free, her freedom should maintain,
Unsold, unmortgag'd for *Earth's* little bribes.
Th' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,
Studious of home, and ardent to return,
Of *Earth* suspicious, *Earth's* enchanted cup
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge
On *immortality*, her godlike taste, [there.
There take large draughts ; make her chief banquet

But some reject this sustenance divine ;
To beggarly vile appetites descend ; [Heaven :
Ask alms of *Earth*, for guests that came from
Sink into slaves ; and sell, for *present* hire,
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)
Their native *freedom*, to the prince who sways
This nether world. And when his payments fail,
When his foul basket gorges them no more,

Or their pall'd palates loath the basket full ;
Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,
For breaking all the chains of Providence,
And bursting their confinement ; though fast barr'd
By laws divine and human ; guarded strong
With *horrors* doubled to defend the pass,
The blackest, *nature*, or *dire guilt* can raise ;
And moted round with fathomless *destruction*,
Sure to receive, and overwhelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons ! is the *cause*, to you unknown,
Or worse, o'erlook'd ; o'erlook'd by magistrates,
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed
Is madness : but the madness of the *heart*.
And what is that ? Our utmost bound of guilt.
A sensual, unreflecting life, is big
With monstrous births, and *suicide*, to crown
The black infernal brood. The bold to break
Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush
Through sacred *Nature's* murder, on their own,
Because they never *think of death*, they die.
'T is equally man's duty, glory, gain,
At once to shun, and meditate, his end.
When by the bed of languishment we sit,
(The seat of *wisdom* ! if our choice, not fate,)
Or, o'er our dying friends, in anguish hang,
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,
Number their moments, and, in every clock,
Start at the voice of an eternity ;
See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
Then sink again, and quiver into *death*,
That most pathetic herald of our own !

How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man
In perfect vengeance? No; in pity sent;
To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,
Indelible, *Death's* image on his heart;
Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile.
The mind turns fool, before the cheek is dry.
Our quick-returning *folly* cancels all;
As the tide rushing raises what is writ
In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a *sigh*?
Or study'd the philosophy of *tears*?
(A science, yet unlectur'd in our schools!)
Hast thou descended deep into the breast,
And seen their source? If not, descend with me,
And trace these briny rivulets to their springs.

Our funeral tears from different causes rise,
As if from separate cisterns in the soul,
Of *various kinds*, they flow. From tender hearts,
By soft contagion call'd, *some* burst at once,
And stream obsequious to the leading eye.
Some ask more time, by curious *art* distill'd.
Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,
Struck by the magic of the public eye,
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain.
Some weep to share the fate of the deceas'd,
So high in merit, and to them so dear.
They dwell on praises, which they think they share;
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.
Some mourn, in proof, that something they could
love:
They weep not to *relieve* their grief, but *show*.

Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,
As conscious all their love is in arrear.
Some mischievously weep, not unappris'd.
Tears, sometimes, aid the conquest of an eye.
With what address the soft Ephesians draw
Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts !
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,
While *liquid pearl* runs trickling down their cheek !
Of hers not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,
Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.
Some weep at *death*, abstracted from the *dead*,
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.
By kind construction some are *deem'd* to weep,
Because a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain ;
As deep in indiscretion, as in woe.
Passion, blind passion ! impotently pours
Tears, that deserve more tears ; while *reason* sleeps,
Or gazes like an idiot, unconcern'd ;
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm ;
Knows not it speaks to *her*, and *her alone*.
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,
That noble gift ! that privilege of man !
From *sorrow's* pang, the birth of endless joy.
But *these* are barren of that birth divine :
They weep impetuous, as the summer storm,
And full as short ! The cruel *grief* soon tam'd,
They make a pastime of the stingless tale ;
Far as the deep resounding knell they spread
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more.
No grain of *wisdom* pays them for their woe. [*death*
Half-round the globe, the tears pump'd up by

Are spent in watering vanities of life ;
In making *folly* flourish still more fair,
When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,
Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust ;
Instead of learning, *there*, her *true support*,
Though there thrown down her true support to learn,
Without Heaven's aid, impatient to be blest,
She crawls to the next shrub, or bramble vile,
Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell ;
With stale, forsworn embraces, clings anew,
The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,
In all the fruitless fopperies of life :
Presents her *weed*, well fancied, at the ball,
And raffles for the *death's head* on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth
Stepp'd in, with his receipt for making smiles,
And blanching sables into bridal bloom.
So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate ;
Who gave that angel boy, on whom he dotes ;
And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth !
Not such, Narcissa, my distress for thee.
I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,
To sacrifice to wisdom. What wast thou ?
“ *Young, gay, and fortunate !* ” Each yields a theme.
I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe ;
(Heaven knows I labour with severer still !)
I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.
A soul without reflection, like a pile
Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy *youth*. What says it to gray hairs ?
Narcissa, I'm become *thy pupil now* —
Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,

She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to Heaven.
Time on this head has snow'd ; yet still 't is borne
Aloft ; nor thinks but on *another's* grave.
Cover'd with shame I speak it, *age* severe
Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair ;
With graceless *gravity*, chastising youth,
That youth chastis'd surpassing in a fault.
Father of all, forgetfulness of death :
As if, like objects passing on the sight,
Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen :
Or, that life's loan *time* ripen'd into right ;
And men might plead prescription from the grave ;
Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.
Deathless ? far from it ! *such* are dead already ;
Their hearts are buried, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some god ! my guardian angel ! tell,
What thus infatuates ? what enchantment plants
The phantom of an age, 'twixt us and death
Already at the door ? He knocks, we hear,
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
Our untouch'd hearts ? What miracle turns off
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers
Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd ?
We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
Around us falling ; wounded oft ourselves ;
Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still !
We see Time's furrows on another's brow,
And Death entrench'd, preparing his assault.
How few themselves in that just mirror see !
Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong !
There death is certain ; doubtful *here* : he *must*,
And *soon* ; we *may*, within an *age*, expire.

Though gray our heads, our thoughts and aims are
green ;

Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent ;
Folly sings six, while *Nature* points at twelve.

Absurd *longevity* ! More, more, it cries :
More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails ?
Object, and *appetite*, must club for joy ;
Shall *folly* labour hard to mend the bow,
Baubles, I mean, that strike us from *without*,
While *Nature* is relaxing every string ?
Ask *thought* for joy ; grow rich, and hoard *within*.
Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
Has nothing of more manly to succeed ?
Contract the taste immortal : learn e'en now
To relish what *alone* subsists hereafter.
Divine, or *none*, henceforth your joys for ever.
Of *age* the glory is, to *wish* to die.
That wish is *praise*, and *promise* ; it applauds
Past life, and promises our future bliss.
What weakness see not children in their sires ?
Grand-climacterical absurdities !
Gray-hair'd authority, to faults of youth,
How shocking ! it makes *folly* thrice a fool ;
And our first childhood might our last despise.
Peace and *esteem* is all that age can hope.
Nothing but *wisdom* gives the *first* ; the *last*,
Nothing, but the *repute of being wise*.
Folly bars both ; our age is quite undone.

What *folly* can be ranker ? Like our shadows,
Our wishes lengthen, as our sun declines.
No wish should loiter, *then*, this side the grave

Our hearts should leave the world, before the knell
Calls for our carcasses to mend the soil.
Enough to live in tempest, die in port ;
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat
Defects of *judgment*, and the *will* subdue ;
Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon ;
And put *good-works* on board ; and wait the wind
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown ;
If *unconsider'd* too, a dreadful scene !

All should be prophets to themselves ; foresee
Their future fate ; their future fate foretaste ;
This art would waste the bitterness of death.
The *thought* of death alone, the *fear* destroys.
A disaffection to that precious thought
Is more than *midnight* darkness on the soul,
Which sleeps beneath it, on a *precipice*,
Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly prest,
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
The thought of death ? That thought is the machine,
The grand machine ! that heaves us from the dust,
And rears us into men. That thought, plied home,
Will soon reduce the ghastly *precipice*
O'er-hanging Hell, will soften the descent,
And gently slope our passage to the grave ;
How warmly to be wish'd ! What heart of flesh
Would trifle with tremendous ? dare extremes ?
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite ? What hand,
Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,
(To speak a language *too well* known to thee,)
Would at a moment give its *all* to chance,
And *stamp* the die for an eternity ?

Aid me, Narcissa ! aid me to keep pace
With *Destiny* ; and ere her scissars cut
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
Of moral death, that ties me to the world.
Sting thou my slumbering *reason* to send forth
A thought of observation on the foe ;
To sally ; and survey the rapid march
Of his ten thousand messengers to man ;
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all
All *accident* apart, by *Nature* sign'd,
My warrant is gone out, though dormant yet ;
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then *forward* only look for Death ?
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.
Man is a self-survivor every year.
Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.
Death 's a destroyer of quotidian prey.
My *youth*, my *noon-tide*, his ; my *yesterday* ;
The bold invader shares the *present* hour.
Each moment on the former shuts the grave.
While man is growing, life is in decrease ;
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.
Our birth is nothing but our death begun ;
As tapers waste that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear, lest that should come to
pass,
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives ?
If fear we must, let *that* death turn us pale,
Which murders *strength* and *ardour* ; what remains
Should rather call on death, than dread his call.
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline ! [knell
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's

(Rude visitant !) knocks hard at your dull sense,
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear !
Be death your theme, in every place and hour ;
Nor longer want, ye monumental sires !
A brother tomb to tell you ye shall die.
That death you *dread* (so great is Nature's skill !)
Know, you shall *court* before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd ; in volumes, deep you sit ;
In wisdom, shallow : pompous ignorance !
Would you be still more learned than the learn'd ?
Learn well to know how much need not be known,
And what that *knowledge*, which impairs your *sense*.
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field ;
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.
You scorn what lies before you in the page
Of *Nature*, and *Experience*, moral truth :
Of indispensable, eternal fruit ;
Fruit, on which mortals feeding, turn to gods :
And dive in *science* for distinguish'd names,
Dishonest fomentation of your pride !
Sinking in virtue, as you rise in fame.
Your learning, like the *lunar* beam, affords
Light, but not heat ; it leaves you undevout,
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.
Awake, ye curious indagators ! fond
Of knowing all, but what avails you known.
If you would learn *Death's* character, attend.
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,
All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,
Together shook in his impartial urn,
Come forth at random : or, if choice is made,

The choice is quite *sarcastic*, and insults
All bold conjecture, and fond hopes of man.
What countless multitudes not only *leave*,
But deeply *disappoint* us, by their deaths!
Though great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, *Death* delights to smite,
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of power,
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate ;
The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud ;
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb :
Me thine, Narcissa ! — What though short thy date ?
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long, which answers life's great end.
The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name ;
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methusalems may die ;
O how *misdated* on their flattering tombs !

Narcissa's *youth* has lectur'd me thus far.
And can her *gaiety* give counsel too ?
That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,
Sparkles instruction ; such as throws new light,
And opens more the *character of death* ;
Ill-known to thee, Lorenzo ! *this* thy vaunt :
“ Give Death his due, the wretched, and the old ;
E'en let him sweep his rubbish to the grave ;
Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
But own man born to *live* as well as *die*.”
Wretched and *old* thou giv'st him ; *young* and *gay*
He takes ; and *plunder* is a tyrant's joy.
What if I prove, “ That furthest from the *fear*,
Are often nearest to the *stroke* of fate ?”

All, more than common, menaces an end.
A blaze betokens brevity of life :
As if bright embers should emit a flame,
Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,
And made youth younger, and taught life to live.
As Nature's opposites wage endless war,
For *this* offence, as treason to the deep
Inviolable stupor of his reign,
Where *lust*, and turbulent *ambition*, sleep,
Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
More life is still more odious ; and, reduc'd
By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.
But *wherefore* aggrandiz'd ? By Heaven's decree,
To plant the soul on her eternal guard,
In awful expectation of our end
Thus runs *Death's* dread commission : " Strike, but so
As most alarms the living by the dead."
Hence *stratagem* delights him, and *surprise*,
And cruel sport with man's securities.
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim : [most.
And, where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs
This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are *his* arts to lay our fears asleep ?
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
In deep dissimulation's darkest night.
Like princes unconfest in foreign courts,
Who travel under cover, *Death* assumes
The name and look of *life*, and dwells among us.
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs :
'Though master of a wider empire far
Than that o'er which the Roman eagle flew.
Like Nero, he 's a fiddler, charioteer,

Or drives his *phaeton*, in female guise ;
Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,
His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the forms least like himself,
His slender self. Hence burly corpulence
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,
Or ambush in a smile ; or wanton dive
In dimples deep ; love's eddies, which draw in
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.
Such, on Narcissa's couch he loiter'd long
Unknown ; and, when detected, still was seen
To *smile* ; such peace has innocence in death !
Most happy they ! whom least his arts deceive.
One eye on *Death*, and one full fix'd on *Heaven*,
Becomes a mortal, and immortal man.
Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy,
I've seen, or dreamt I saw, the tyrant *dress* ;
Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.
Say, Muse, for thou remember'st, call it back,
And show Lorenzo the surprising scene ;
If 't was a dream, his genius can explain.

'T was in a circle of the *gay* I stood.
Death would have enter'd ; *Nature* push'd him back ;
Supported by a doctor of renown,
His point he gain'd. Then artfully *dismist*
The sage ; for *Death* design'd to be conceal'd.
He gave an old vivacious *usurer*
His meagre aspect, and his naked bones ;
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,
A pamper'd *spendthrift* ; whose fantastic air,
Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,

He took in change, and underneath the pride
Of costly linen, tuck'd his filthy shroud.
His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane ;
And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipt,
Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where ?
Where is he not ? For his peculiar haunts,
Let *this* suffice ; sure as night follows day,
Death treads in *pleasure's* footsteps round the world,
When *pleasure* treads the paths, which *reason* shuns.
When, against *reason*, *riot* shuts the door,
And *gaiety* supplies the place of *sense*,
Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die ;
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,
Inly he laughs, to see them laugh at him,
As absent far ; and when the revel burns,
When *fear* is banish'd, and triumphant thought,
Calling for all the joys beneath the Moon,
Against him turns the key, and bids him sup
With their progenitors — he drops his mask ;
Frowns out at full ; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terrour and surprise,
From his black masque of nitre, touch'd by fire,
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And *more than simple conquest*, in the fiend ?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commission'd to destroy ?
In *death's* uncertainty thy danger lies.

Is *death* uncertain? Therefore thou be fit ;
Fixt as a centinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear ;
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
And *fate* surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong ;
Thus give each day the merit, and renown,
Of dying well ; though doom'd but once to die.
Nor let life's *period* hidden, (as from most,)
Hide too from thee the precious *use* of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate.
Soon, not surprising, *Death* his visit paid.
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,
Nor *gaiety* forgot it was to die :
Though *fortune* too, (our third and final theme,)
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,
And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,
To dazzle, and debauch it from its mark.
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man ;
And every thought that misses it, is blind.
Fortune, with *youth* and *gaiety*, conspir'd
To weave a *triple* wreath of happiness
(If happiness on Earth) to crown her brow.
And could *Death* charge through such a shining
shield ?

That shining shield *invites* the tyrant's spear,
As if to damp our elevated aims,
And strongly preach humility to man.
O how portentous is prosperity !
How, comet-like, it threatens, while it shines !
Few years but yield us proof of *Death's* ambition,
To cull his victims from the fairest fold,

And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
With recent honours, bloom'd with every bliss,
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
The gaudy centre, of the public eye,
When *fortune* thus has toss'd her child in air,
Snatcht from the covert of an humble state,
How often have I seen him dropt at once,
Our morning's envy ! and our evening's sigh !
As if her bounties were the signal given,
The flowery wreath to mark the sacrifice,
And call Death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

High fortune seems in cruel league with *fate*.
Ask you for what ? To give his war on man
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil ;
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime
Of life ? To hang his airy nest on high,
On the slight timber of the topmost bough,
Rockt at each breeze, and menacing a fall ?
Granting grim *Death* at equal distance *there* ;
Yet *peace* begins just where *ambition* ends.
What makes man wretched ? Happiness *denied* ?
Lorenzo ! no : 'T is happiness *disdain'd*.
She comes too meanly drest to win our smile ;
And calls herself *Content*, a homely name !
Our flame is *transport*, and *content* our scorn.
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,
And weds a *toil*, a *tempest*, in her stead ;
A *tempest* to warm *transport* near of kin.
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
Life's modest joys we ruin, while we raise ;

And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace ;
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth !
Of fortune fond ! as thoughtless of thy fate !
As late I drew *Death's* picture, to stir up
Thy wholesome fears ; now, drawn in contrast, see
Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
See, high in air, the sportive goddess hangs,
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
All rush rapacious ; friends o'er trodden friends ;
Sons o'er their fathers ; subjects o'er their kings ;
Priests o'er their gods ; and lovers o'er the fair,
(Still *more* ador'd,) to snatch the golden shower.

Gold glitters most, where *virtue* shines no more ;
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
O what a precious pack of votaries
Unkennel'd from the prisons, and the stews,
Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise ;
All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,
And, wide expanding their voracious jaws,
Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,
Untasted, through mad appetite for more ;
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still.
Sagacious all, to trace the smallest game,
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they lanch, they fly,
O'er just, o'er sacred, all-forbidden ground,
Drunk with the burning scent of place or power,
Stanch to the foot of lucre, till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark

Their manners, thou their various fates survey.
With aim mis-measur'd, and impetuous speed,
Some darting, strike their ardent wish far off,
Through fury to possess it : *some* succeed,
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.
From *some*, by sudden blasts, 't is whirl'd away,
And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dreamt of gain.
To *some* it sticks so close, that, when torn off,
Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
Together *some* (unhappy rivals !) seize,
And rend abundance into poverty ;
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles :
Smiles too the goddess ; but smiles most at those,
(Just victims of exorbitant desire !)
Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain ;
The number small, which happiness can bear.
Though *various* for awhile their fates ; at last
One curse involves them all : at *Death's* approach,
All read their riches backward into loss,
And mourn, in just proportion to their store.

And *Death's* approach (if orthodox my song)
Is hasten'd by the lure of *Fortune's* smiles.
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold ?
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin ?
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow ;
A blow which, while it executes, alarms ;
And startles thousands with a single fall.
As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,

Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,
The Sun's defiance, and the flock's defence ;
By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdued,
Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height
In cumbrous ruin, thunders to the ground :
The conscious forest trembles at the shock,
And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.

These high-aim'd darts of *Death*, and these alone,
Should I collect, my quiver would be full.

A quiver, which, suspended in mid air,
Or near Heaven's *Archer*, in the zodiac, hung,
(So could it be,) *should* draw the public eye,
The gaze and contemplation of mankind !

A constellation awful, yet benign, .
To guide the *gay* through life's tempestuous wave ;
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock,
" From greater danger, to grow more secure,
And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate."

Lysander, happy past the common lot,
Was warn'd of danger, but too *gay* to fear.
He woo'd the fair *Aspasia* : she was kind :
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blest :
All who knew, envied ; yet in envy lov'd :
Can fancy form more finisht happiness ?
Fixt was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires
Float in the wave, and break against the shore :
So break those glittering shadows, human joys.
The faithless morning smil'd : he takes his leave,
To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve.
The rising storm forbids. The news arrives :
Untold, she saw it in her servant's eye.

She felt it seen (her heart was apt to feel) ;
And, drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.
Now, round the sumptuous, bridal monument,
The guilty billows innocently roar ;
And the rough sailor, passing, drops a tear ;
A tear ? — Can tears suffice ? — But not for *me*.
How vain our efforts ! and our arts how vain !
The *distant* train of thought I took to shun,
Has thrown me on my fate — *These* died together ;
Happy in ruin ! *undivorc'd* by death !
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace —
Narcissa ! Pity bleeds at thought of thee.
Yet thou wast only *near* me ; not *myself*.
Survive *myself* ? — *That* cures all other woe.
Narcissa lives ; Philander is forgot.
O the soft commerce ! O the tender ties,
Close-twisted with the fibres of the heart !
Which, broken, break them ; and drain off the soul
Of human joy ; and make it pain to live —
And is it then to live ? When *such* friends part,
'T is the survivor dies — My heart, no more.

NIGHT THE SIXTH.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.

*Containing the Nature, Proof, and Importance, of
Immortality.*

PART I.

*Where, among other Things, Glory and Riches are
particularly considered.*

TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY PELHAM, FIRST LORD
COMMISSIONER OF THE TREASURY, AND CHAN-
CELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

Preface.

Few ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, *Is man immortal, or is he not?* If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, *truth, reason, religion*, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shown) mere empty sound, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the *real* source and support of all our infidelity; how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

▲ ▲ 3

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than *abstract reasonings*; and we daily see *bodies* drop around us, but the *soul* is invisible. The power which *inclination* has over the *judgment*, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest that souls should not survive! The heathen world confessed, that they rather hoped, than firmly *believed*, immortality! And how many heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel: but by how many is the Gospel rejected, or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being accidentally privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded that most, if not all, our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronise) are supported in their deplorable error, by some doubt of their *immortality*, at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive, that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly, and impartially, inquire after the surest means of escaping one, and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments, which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all, who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing,

with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall, *here*, occur, which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments in this, of all points the *most* important. For, as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed ; but it is undisputed for this reason *only* ; viz. because, where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable. And of consequence no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by *vanity* ; which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

SHE * (for I know not yet her name in Heaven)

Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene ;

Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail ?

This seeming mitigation but inflames ;

This fancied medicine heightens the disease.

The longer known, the closer still she grew ;

And gradual parting is a gradual death.

'T is the grim tyrant's engine, which extorts,

By tardy pressure's still increasing weight,

From hardest hearts, confession of distress.

O the long, dark approach through years of pain,
Death's gallery ! (might I dare to call it so)

With dismal *doubt*, and sable *terroure*, hung :

Sick *hope*'s pale lamp, its only glimmering ray :

There, fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,

Forbid *self-love* itself to flatter, there.

How oft I gaz'd, prophetically sad !

How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles !

* Referring to Night V.

In smiles she sunk *her* grief to lessen *mine*.
She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain,
Like powerful armies trenching at a town,
By slow, and silent, but resistless sap,
In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
Death urg'd his deadly siege ; in spite of art,
Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends
To succour frail humanity. Ye stars !
(Not now *first* made familiar to my sight)
And thou, O Moon ! bear witness ; many a night
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
Tied down by sore attention to the shock,
By ceaseless depredations on a life
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
Of observation ! darker every hour !
Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,
And pointed at eternity below ;
When my soul shuddered at futurity ;
When, on a moment's point, th' important die,
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell.
And turn'd up life ; my title to more woe.

But why more woe ? More comfort let it be,
Nothing is dead, but that which wish'd to die ;
Nothing is dead, but wretchedness and pain ;
Nothing is dead, but what encumber'd, gall'd,
Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from *real life*.
Where dwells *that* wish most ardent of the wise ?
Too dark the Sun to see it ; highest stars
Too low to reach it ; *Death*, great *Death* alone,
O'er stars and Sun triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our *transition* ; though the mind,
An artist at creating self-alarms,

Rich in expedients for inquietude,
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true? The tyrant never *sat*.
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death, and his image rising in the brain,
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike;
Fear shakes the pencil; *Fancy* loves excess;
Dark *Ignorance* is lavish of her shades:
And *these* the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst; 't is past; new prospects rise;
And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
Far other views our contemplation claim,
Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;
Views that suspend our agonies in death.
Wrapt in the thought of *immortality*,
Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!
Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on;
And find the soul unsated with her theme.
Its *nature*, *proof*, *importance*, fire my song.
O that my song could emulate my soul!
Like her, immortal. No! — the soul disdains
A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames;
If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
Let not the *laurel*, but the *palm*, inspire.

Thy *nature*, *immortality*! who knows?
And yet who knows it not? It is but life
In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
And spun for ever; dipt by cruel fate
In Stygian dye, how *black*, how *brittle here*!
How short our correspondence with the Sun!
And while it lasts, inglorious! Our best deeds,

How wanting in their weight ! Our highest joys,
Small cordials to support us in our pain,
And give us strength to suffer. But how *great*,
To mingle interests, converse amities,
With all the sons of *reason*, scatter'd wide
Through habitable space, wherever born,
Howe'er endow'd ! To live free citizens
Of universal Nature ! To lay hold
By more than feeble *faith* on the *Supreme* !
To call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines
(*Mines*, which support archangels in their state)
Our own ! To rise in science, as in bliss,
Initiate in the secrets of the skies !
To read creation ; read its mighty plan
In the bare bosom of the Deity !
The plan, and execution, to collate !
To see, before each glance of piercing thought,
All cloud, all shadow, blown remote ; and leave
No mystery — but that of love divine,
Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,
From Earth's *aceldama*, this field of blood,
Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
From darkness, and from dust, to *such* a scene !
Love's element ! true joy's illustrious home !
From Earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair !
What exquisite vicissitude of fate !
Blest absolution of our blackest hour !

Lorenzo, these are thoughts that make man, man,
The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
And every moment fear to sink beneath
The clod *we* tread ; soon trodden by our sons,)

How great, in the wild whirl of *time's* pursuits,
To stop, and pause, involv'd in high presage,
Through the long vista of a thousand years,
To stand contemplating our distant selves,
As in a magnifying mirror seen,
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine !
To prophesy our own futurities ;
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends !
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
As far beyond conception as desert,
Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers, and the tale !

Lorenzo, swells thy bosom at the thought ?
The swell becomes thee : 't is an honest pride.
Revere thyself ; — and yet thyself despise.
His *nature* no man can o'er-rate ; and none
Can under-rate his *merit*. Take good heed,
Nor there be modest, where thou should'st be proud ;
That almost universal error shun.
How *just* our pride, when we behold *those* heights !
Not those *ambition* paints in air, but those
Reason points out, and ardent *virtue* gains ;
And angels emulate : our pride how just ! [quit
When mount we ? When these shackles cast ? When
This cell of the creation ? this small nest,
Stuck in a corner of the universe,
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud, and fine-spun air ?
Fine-spun to sense ; but gross and feculent
To souls celestial ; souls ordain'd to breathe
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky ;
Greatly triumphant on *time's* further shore,
Where *virtue* reigns, enrich'd with full arrears ;
While *pomp imperial* begs an alms of peace.

In empire high, or in proud science deep,
Ye born of Earth ! on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The gust, the glow of rational delight,
As on *this* theme, which angels praise and share?
Man's fates and favours are a theme in Heaven.

What wretched repetition cloy^s us *here* !
What periodic potions for the sick !
Distemper'd bodies ! and distemper'd minds !
In an *eternity*, what scenes shall strike !
Adventures thicken ! novelties surprise !
What webs of wonder shall unravel, *there* !
What full day pour on all the paths of Heaven,
And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep !
How shall the blessed day of our discharge
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of fate,
And straighten its inextricable maze !

If inextinguishable thirst in man
To know ; how rich, how full, our banquet *there* !
There, not the *moral* world alone unfolds ;
The world *material*, lately seen in shades,
And, in those shades, by fragments only seen,
And seen those fragments by the *labouring* eye,
Unbroken, then, illustrious and entire,
Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
In full dimensions, swells to the survey ;
And enters, at one glance, the ravisht sight.
From some superior point (where, who can tell ?
Suffice it, 't is a point where gods reside)
How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,
In the vast ocean of unbounded space,
Behold an infinite of floating worlds

Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,
In endless voyage, without port? *The least*
Of these disseminated orbs, how great!
Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,
Huge, as leviathan, to that small race,
Those twinkling multitudes of little life,
He swallows unperceiv'd? *Stupendous* these!
Yet what are these stupendous to the *whole*!
As particles, as atoms ill perceiv'd;
As circulating globules in our veins;
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!
Exuberant source! perhaps, I wrong thee still.

If admiration is a source of joy,
What transport hence! yet this the least in Heaven.
What *this* to that illustrious robe *he* wears,
Who toss'd this mass of wonders from his hand,
A specimen, an earnest of his power?
'T is to *that glory*, whence all glory flows,
As the mead's meanest floweret to the Sun,
Which gave it birth. But what, this Sun of Heaven?
This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?
Death, only Death, the question can resolve.
By Death, cheap-bought th' ideas of our joy;
The *bare* ideas! solid happiness
So distant from its shadow chas'd below.

And chase we still the phantom through the fire,
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?
And toil we still for sublunary pay?
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,
Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,
Our *more* than vitals spin (if no regard
To great futurity) in curious webs

Of subtle thought, and exquisite design ;
(Fine net-work of the brain !) to catch a fly ?
The momentary buzz of vain renown !

A *name* ; a mortal immortality !

Or (meaner still !) instead of grasping air,
For sordid *lucre*, plunge we in the mire ?
Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain,
For vile contaminating trash ; throw up
Our hope in Heaven, our dignity with man ?
And deify the dirt, matur'd to gold ?

Ambition, avarice ; the two *demons* these,
Which goad through every slough our human herd,
Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.
How low the wretches stoop ! How steep they climb !
These *demons* burn mankind ; but most possess
Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in *time* to hide *eternity* ?
And why not in an atom on the shore
To cover ocean ? or a mote, the Sun ?
Glory and wealth ! have they this blinding power ?
What if to *them* I prove Lorenzo blind ?
Would it surprise thee ? Be thou then surpris'd ;
Thou *neither* know'st ; their *nature* learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as *these subjects* seem,
What close connection ties them to my theme.

First, what is *true* ambition ? The pursuit
Of glory, nothing *less* than man can share.
Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,
Their arts and conquests *animals* might boast,
And claim their *laurel* crowns, as well as we ;
But not *celestial*. Here we stand alone ;

As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent ;
If *prone* in thought, our stature is our shame :
And man should blush, his forehead meets the skies.
The *visible* and *present* are for brutes,
A slender portion ! and a narrow bound !
These *reason*, with an energy divine,
O'erleaps ; and claims the *future* and *unseen* ;
The vast unseen ! the future fathomless !
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,
Leaving gross *Nature's* sediments below,
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits
The sage and hero of the fields and woods,
Asserts his rank, and rises into man.
This is ambition : this is *human* fire.

Can *parts* or *place* (two bold pretenders !) make
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng ?

Genius and *art*, ambition's boasted wings,
Our boast but ill deserve. A feeble aid !
Dedalian enginery ! If these alone
Assist our flight, *fame's* flight is *glory's* fall.
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.
A celebrated wretch, when I behold ;
When I behold a genius bright, and base,
Of towering talents, and terrestrial aims ;
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mix'd, and glittering in the dust,
Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,
At once *compassion* soft, and *envy*, rise —
But wherefore envy ? Talents, angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments

In false ambition's hand, to finish faults
Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Great *ill* is an achievement of great *powers*.
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.
Reason the means, *affections* choose our end ;
Means have no merit, if our end amiss.
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain ;
What is a Pelham's head, to Pelham's heart ?
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.
Right ends, *and* means, make wisdom : worldly-wise
Is but *half-witted*, at its highest praise.

Let *genius* then despair to make thee great ;
Nor flatter *station*. What is station high ?
'T is a proud mendicant ; it boasts, and begs ;
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
And oft the throng denies its charity.
Monarchs and ministers are awful names !
Whoever wear them, challenge our devoir.
Religion, public order, both exact
External homage, and a supple knee,
To beings pompously set up, to serve
The meanest slave ; *all more* is merit's due,
Her sacred and inviolable right,
Nor ever paid the *monarch*, but the *man*.
Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior *worth* ;
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.
Fools, indeed, drop the *man* in their account,
And vote the *mantle* into majesty.
Let the *small savage* boast his silver fur ;
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,
His *own*, descending fairly from his sires.
Shall man be proud to wear *his* livery,

And souls in *ermin* scorn a soul without?
Can *place* or lessen us, or aggrandize?
Pygmies are pygmies still, though perch'd on alps;
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself:
Virtue alone outbuilds the *pyramids*:
Her monuments shall last, when Egypt's fall.
Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?
The cause is lodg'd in *immortality*.
Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for power;
What station charms thee? I'll instal thee there;
'T is thine. And art thou greater than *before*?
Then thou before wast something less than man.
Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride?
That treacherous pride betrays the dignity;
'That pride defames humanity, and calls
The being mean, which *staffs* or *strings* can raise.
That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,
From blindness bold, and towering to the skies.
'T is born of *ignorance*, which knows not man;
An angel's second; nor his second, long.
A Nero quitting his imperial throne,
And courting glory from the tinkling string,
But faintly shadows an immortal soul,
With empire's self, to pride, or rapture, fir'd.
If nobler motives minister no cure,
E'en vanity forbids thee to be vain.
High worth is elevated place: 't is more;
It makes the post stand candidate for thee;
Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;
Though no *exchequer* it commands, 't is wealth;
And though it wears no *ribband*, 't is renown;

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Renown, that would not quit thee, though disgrac'd,
Nor leave thee pendant on a master's smile.

Other ambition Nature interdicts ;
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,
By pointing at his origin, and end ;
Milk, and a swathe, *at first*, his whole demand ;
His whole domain, *at last*, a turf, or stone ;
To whom, *between*, a world may seem too small.

Souls *truly* great dart forward on the wing
Of *just* ambition, to the grand result :
The *curtains* fall : *there*, see the buskin'd chief
Unshod behind this momentary scene ;
Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,
As vice or virtue, sinks him, or sublimes ;
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
This antic prelude of grotesque events,
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
To *Christian* pride ! which had with horror shock'd
The darkest *Pagans* offer'd to their gods.

O thou *most Christian* enemy to peace ;
Again in arms ? Again provoking fate ?
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes ;
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why *this* so rare ? Because forgot of all
The day of death ; that venerable day,
Which sits as judge ; that day, which shall pronounce
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.
Lorenzo, never shut thy thought against it ;

Be *levees* ne'er so full, afford it room,
And give it audience in the *cabinet*.
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair, if thou art great, or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that *ambition*? Then let flames *descend*,
Point to the centre their inverted spires,
And learn humiliation from a *soul*,
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.
Yet *these* are they the world pronounces wise;
The world which cancels Nature's right and wrong,
And casts *new* wisdom: e'en the grave man lends
His solemn face, to countenance the coin.
Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,
The most ambitious, unambitious, mean;
In triumph, mean; and abject on a throne.
Nothing can make it less than mad in man,
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,
But reaching *him*, who gave her wings to fly.
When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,
And downward pores, for that which shines above,
Substantial happiness, and true renown;
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! powerful source of good and ill!
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,
When disengag'd from Earth, with greater ease,
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies;

By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,
It turns a curse ; it is our chain, and scourge,
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lie,
Close grated by the sordid bars of *sense* ;
All prospect of *eternity* shut out ;
And, but for *execution*, ne'er set free.

With error in *ambition* justly charged,
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his *wealth* ?
What if thy rental I reform ? and draw
An inventory *new* to set thee right ?
Where thy *true treasure* ? Gold says, " Not in me : "
And, " Not in me," the diamond. Gold is poor ;
India's insolvent ; seek it in thyself,
Seek in thy naked self, and find it there ;
In *being* so descended, form'd, endow'd ;
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race !
Erect, immortal, rational, divine !
In *senses* which inherit Earth, and Heavens ;
Enjoy the various riches *Nature* yields ;
Far nobler ! *give* the riches they enjoy ;
Give taste to fruits ; and harmony to groves ;
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire ;
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,
And half-create the wondrous world they see.
Our *senses*, as our *reason*, are divine.
But for the magic organ's powerful charm,
Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos, still.

Objects are but th' occasion ; ours th' *exploit* ;
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
Which Nature's admirable picture draws ;
And beautifies creation's ample dome.

Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,
Man makes the matchless image, man admires.
Say, then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,
Superior wonders in himself forgot,
His admiration waste on objects round,
When Heaven makes him the soul of all he sees?
Absurd ! not rare ! so great, so mean, is man.
What wealth in *senses* such as these ! What wealth
In *fancy*, fir'd to form a fairer scene
Than *sense* surveys ! In *memory's* firm record,
Which, should it perish, could this world recall
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years !
In colours fresh, originally bright,
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate !
What wealth in *intellect*, that sovereign power,
Which *sense* and *fancy* summons to the bar ;
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends ;
And from the mass those *underlings* import,
From their materials sifted, and refin'd,
And in *truth's* balance accurately weigh'd,
Forms *art*, and *science*, *government*, and *law* ;
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,
The vitals, and the grace of *civil* life !
And *manners* (sad exception !) set aside,
Strikes out, with master hand, a copy fair
Of *his* idea, whose indulgent thought
Long, long, ere chaos teem'd, plann'd *human* bliss.
What *wealth* in souls that soar, dive, range
around,
Disdaining limit, or from place, or time ;
And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear
Th' Almighty *fiat*, and the *trumpet's* sound !

Bold, on creation's outside walk, and view
What was, and is, and *more* than e'er shall be ;
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
Creations new in fancy's field to rise !
Souls, that can grasp whate'er th' Almighty made,
And wander wild through things impossible !
What *wealth*, in *faculties* of endless growth,
In quenchless *passions* violent to crave,
In *liberty* to choose, in *power* to reach,
And in *duration* (how thy riches rise !)
Duration to *perpetuate* — boundless bliss !

Ask you, what *power* resides in feeble man
That bliss to gain ? Is *virtue's*, then, unknown ?
Virtue, our present peace, our future prize.
Man's unprecious, natural estate,
Improveable at will, in virtue lies ;
Its tenure sure ; its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap ! for what ?
To breed new wants, and beggar us the more ;
Then make a richer scramble for the throng ?
Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long
Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,
Like rubbish from dislodging engines thrown,
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly ;
Fly diverse ; fly to foreigners, to foes ;
New masters court, and call the former fool
(How justly !) for dependence on their stay.
Wide scatter, first, our playthings ; then, our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace ?
Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme :
Riches enable to be richer still ;
And, *richer still*, what mortal can resist ?

Thus wealth (a cruel task-master !) enjoins
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train !
And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.
The poor are *half* as wretched as the rich ;
Whose proud and painful privilege it is,
At once, to bear a double load of woe ;
To feel the stings of *envy*, and of *want*,
Outrageous want ! both Indies cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content.
Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease ;
Sick, or encumber'd, is our happiness.
A *competence* is all we can *enjoy*.
O be content, where Heaven can give no more !
More, like a flash of water from a lock,
Quickens our spirits' movement for an hour ;
But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys
Above our native temper's common stream.
Hence disappointment lurks in every prize,
As bees in flowers ; and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns ;
Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.
Much learning shows how little mortals *know* ;
Much wealth, how little worldlings can *enjoy* ;
At best, it babies us with endless toys,
And keeps us children till we drop to dust.
As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,
They fail to find what they so plainly see ;
Thus men, in shining riches, see the face
Of happiness, nor know it is a shade ;
But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,
And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want !

Who lives to *nature*, rarely can be poor ;
Who lives to *fancy*, never can be rich.
Poor is the man in debt ; the man of gold,
In debt to *fortune*, trembles at her power.
The man of *reason* smiles at her, and death.
O what a patrimony this ! A *being*
Of such inherent strength and majesty,
Not worlds possess can raise it ; worlds destroy'd
Can't injure ; which holds on its glorious course,
When thine, O *Nature* ! ends ; too blest to mourn
Creation's obsequies. What treasure, *this* !
The *monarch* is a beggar to the man.

Immortal ! Ages past, yet nothing gone !
Morn without eve ! a race without a goal !
Unshorten'd by progression infinite !
Futurity for ever future ! Life
Beginning still where computation ends !
'T is the description of a *Deity* !
'T is the description of the *meanest slave* :
The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn ?
The meanest slave thy *sovereign* glory shares.
Proud youth ! fastidious of the *lower world* !
Man's *lawful* pride includes humility :
Stoops to the lowest ; is too great to find
Inferiors ; all immortal ! brothers all !
Proprietors *eternal* of thy love.

Immortal ! What can strike the *sense* so strong,
As this the *soul* ? It thunders to the thought ;
Reason amazes ; *gratitude* o'erwhelms ;
No more we slumber on the brink of fate ;
Rous'd at the sound, th' exulting soul ascends,
And breathes her native air ; an air that feeds

Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires ;
Quick kindles all that is divine within us ;
Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame ?

Immortal ! Were but *one* immortal, how
Would others envy ! How would thrones adore !
Because 't is common, is the blessing lost ?
How *this* ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven !
O vain, vain, vain, all else ! *Eternity !*
A glorious, and a *needful* refuge, *that*,
From vile imprisonment, in abject views.
'T is *immortality*, 't is that alone,
Amid life's *pains*, *abasement*, *emptiness*,
The soul can *comfort*, *elevate*, and *fill*.
That only, and that amply, this performs ;
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above ;
Their terror *those*, and *these* their lustre lose ;
Eternity depending covers all ;
Eternity depending all achieves ;
Sets Earth at distance ; casts her into shades ;
Blends her distinctions ; abrogates her powers ;
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,
The man beneath ; if I may call him man,
Whom *immortality*'s full force inspires.
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought ;
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
By minds quite conscious of their high descent,
Their present province, and their future prize ;
Divinely darting upward every wish,
Warm on the wing, in glorious *absence* lost !

Doubt you this truth? Why labours your belief?
If Earth's whole orb by some due distanc'd eye
Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.
Thus *Earth*, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is swallow'd in *Eternity's* vast round.
To that stupendous view when souls awake,
So large of late, so mountainous to man,
Time's toys subside; and *equal* all below.

Enthusiastic, this? Then all are weak,
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
Some souls have soar'd; or martyrs ne'er had bled.
And all *may* do, what has by *man* been done.
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?
What slave *unblest*, who from to-morrow's dawn
Expects an empire? He forgets his chain,
And, thron'd in thought, his *absent* sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!
Her own immense appointments to compute,
Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
In this her dark minority, how toils,
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;
What heart but *trembles* at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!
Are there who wrap the world so close about them,
They see no further than the clouds; and dance
On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,
Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,

Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?

Are there, Lorenzo? Is it possible?

Are there on Earth (let me not call them men)

Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts;

Unconscious as the mountain of its ore;

Or rock, of its inestimable gem?

When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, *these*

Shall know their treasure; treasure, *then*, no more.

Are there (still more amazing!) who resist

The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,

The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?

Who through this bosom-barrier burst their way,

And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink?

Who labour downwards through th' opposing powers

Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,

To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock

Of endless night; night darker than the grave's?

Who fight the proofs of immortality?

With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,

Work all their engines, level their black fires,

To blot from man this attribute divine,

(Than vital blood far dearer to the wise,)

Blasphemers, and rank atheists to *themselves*?

To contradict them, see all Nature rise!

What object, what event, the Moon beneath,

But argues, or endears, an after-scene?

To *reason* proves, or weds it to *desire*?

All things proclaim it *needful*; some advance

One precious step beyond, and prove it *sure*.

A thousand arguments swarm round my pen.

From *Heaven*, and *Earth*, and *man*. Indulge a few

By Nature, as her *common habit*, worn ;
So *pressing* Providence a truth to teach,
Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou ! whose all-providential eye surveys,
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
Creation, and holds empire far beyond !
Eternity's inhabitant august !
Of two eternities amazing Lord !

One past, ere man's or angel's had begun ;
Aid ! while I rescue from the foe's assault
Thy glorious immortality in *man* :
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
Of moment infinite ! but relish'd most
By those who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
Of thee the great *Immutable*, to man
Speaks wisdom : is his oracle supreme ;
And he who most consults her, is most wise.
Lorenzo, to this heavenly Delphos haste ;
And come back all-immortal ; all-divine :
Look Nature through, 't is *revolution* all ; [night
All change ; no death. Day follows night, and
The dying day ; stars rise, and set, and rise ;
Earth takes th' example. . See, the Summer gay,
With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter gray,
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
Blows Autumn, and his golden fruits, away :
Then melts into the Spring : soft Spring, with *breath*
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the *first*. All, to re-flourish, fades ;
As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend :
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man *advances* ; both
Eternal, *that* a circle, *this* a line.
That gravitates, *this* soars. Th' aspiring soul,
Ardent, and *tremulous*, like flame, ascends,
Zeal and *humility* her wings, to Heaven.
The world of matter, with its various forms,
All dies into new life. Life born from death
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being, lost,
With change of counsel charges the Most High.

What hence infers Lorenzo? Can it be?
Matter immortal? And shall *spirit* die?
Above the nobler, shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
No resurrection know? Shall man alone,
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileg'd than grain, on which he feeds?
Is man, in whom alone is power to prize
The bliss of being, or with previous pain
Deplore its period, by the spleen of fate
Severely doom'd *death's* single unredeem'd?
If Nature's *revolution* speaks aloud,
In her *gradation*, hear her louder still.
Look Nature through, 't is neat *gradation* all.
By what minute degrees her scale ascends!
Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,
To that above it join'd, to that beneath.
Parts, into parts reciprocally shot,
Abhor divorce: what love of union reigns!
Here, dormant matter waits a call to life; [sense;
Half-life, half-death, join'd there; here life and

There, sense from reason steals a glimmering ray ;
Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
Of incorporeal life ? those realms of bliss
Where death hath no dominion ? Grant a make
Half-mortal, half-immortal ; earthy, part,
And part ethereal ; grant the soul of man
Eternal ; or in man the series ends.
Wide yawns the gap ; connection is no more ;
Check'd *reason* halts ; her next step wants support ;
Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme ;
A scheme, *analogy* pronounc'd so true ;
Analogy, man's surest guide below.

Thus far, *all Nature* calls on thy belief.
And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,
False attestation on all Nature charge,
Rather than violate his league with death ?
Renounce his reason, rather than renounce
The dust belov'd, and run the *risk* of Heaven ?
O what indignity to deathless souls !
What treason to the majesty of man !
Of man *immortal* ! Hear the lofty style :
“ If so decreed, th' Almighty Will be done.
Let Earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust. The *soul* is safe ;
The *man* emerges ; mounts above the wreck,
As towering flame from *Nature's* funeral pyre ;
O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles ;
His charter, his inviolable rights,
Well pleas'd to learn from thunder's impotence,
Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms.”
But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo !

The glories of the world thy sevenfold *shield*.
Other ambition than of crowns in air,
And superlunary felicities,
Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can ;
And turn those glories that enchant, against thee.
What ties thee to *this* life, proclaims the *next*.
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.

Come, my *ambitious* ! let us mount together
(To mount, Lorenzo never can refuse) ;
And from the clouds, where pride delights to dwell,
Look down on Earth. — What see'st thou ? Won-
drous things !

Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies.
What lengths of labour'd lands ! what loaded seas !
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war !
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand :
What level'd mountains ! and what lifted vales !
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.
Some mid the wondering waves majestic rise ;
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.
Far greater still ! (what cannot mortal might ?)
See, wide dominions ravish'd from the deep !
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
Or southward turn ; to *delicate* and *grand*,
The finer arts there ripen in the sun.
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
Ascend the skies ! the proud triumphal arch
Shows us half Heaven beneath its ample bend.
High through mid-air, *here*, streams are taught to
flow ;

Whole rivers, *there*, laid by in basons, sleep.
Here, plains turn oceans ; *there*, vast oceans join
Through kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to
shore !

And chang'd creation takes its face from man.
Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword ?
See fields in blood ; hear naval thunders rise ;
Britannia's voice ! that awes the world to peace.
How yon enormous mole, projecting, breaks
The mid-sea, furious waves ! Their roar amidst,
Out-speaks the Deity, and says, " O main !
Thus far, nor farther ; *new* restraints obey."
Earth's disembowell'd ! measur'd are the skies !
Stars are detected in their deep recess !
Creation widens ! vanquish'd *Nature* yields !
Her secrets are extorted ! *art* prevails !
What monument of genius, spirit, power !

And now, Lorenzo ! raptur'd at this scene,
Whose glories render Heaven superfluous ! say,
Whose footsteps these ?—*Immortals* have been here.
Could less than souls immortal this have done ?
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal ;
And proofs of immortality *forgot*.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess,
These are *ambition's* works : and these are great :
But *this*, the least immortal souls can do ;
Transcend them all.—But what can these transcend ?
Dost ask me what ? — One sigh for the *distress*.
What then for *infidels* ? A deeper sigh.
'T is *moral grandeur* makes the mighty man :
How *little* they, who think aught *great* below !

All our ambitions Death defeats, but one ;
And that it crowns. Here cease we : but, ere long,
More powerful *proof* shall take the field against thee,
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

NIGHT THE SEVENTH.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART II.

*Containing the Nature, Proof, and Importance, of
Immortality.*

PREFACE.

As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of *levity* is a land of *guilt*. A *serious mind* is the native soil of every virtue ; and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The *soul's immortality* has been the favourite theme with the *serious* of all ages. Nor is it strange ; it is a subject by far the most interesting, and important, that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always *was* and always *will be*. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of *increase*, at this day ; a sort of *occasional* importance is superadded to the *natural* weight of it ; if that opinion which is advanced in the preface to the preceding *Night*, be just. It is there supposed, that all our *infidels*, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable error, by some doubts of their *immortality*, at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more I am

persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a *futurity* is a strange error; yet it is an error into which *bad* men may *naturally* be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? There are but two in nature; but two, within the compass of human thought. And these are — That either God *will* not, or *can* not punish. Considering the divine attributes, the *first* is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And since *omnipotence* is as much a divine attribute as *holiness*, that God *cannot* punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner, almost incredible. And since on *this* member of their *alternative*, there are some very small *appearances* in their *favour*, and none at all on the *other*, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an *immediate* and *absolute* despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which *this* argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large; and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me, are ventured on in them. There also the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of *annihilation* in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen, for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of heathen antiquity : what pity it is they are not sincere ! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider, with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by *those* whom they so much admire ! What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates (it is well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed : yet this great master of temper was angry ; and angry at his last hour ; and angry with his friend ; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment ; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising ? What could be the cause ? The cause was for his honour ; it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for *immortality* : for, his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, “ Where he should deposit his remains ? ” it was resented by Socrates as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean, as to have a regard for any thing, even in himself, that was *not immortal*.

This fact, well considered, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates ; or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory : and consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality : which is all I desire ; and that, for *their* sakes : for I am persuaded, that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7. 1744.

Contents of the Seventh Night.

In the Sixth Night, arguments were drawn from *Nature*, in proof of *immortality* : here, others are drawn from *man* : from his *discontent* ; from his *passions* and *powers* ; from the gradual growth of *reason* ; from his fear of *death* ; from the nature of *hope*, and of *virtue* ; from *knowledge* and *love*, as being the most essential properties of the soul ; from the *order of creation* ; from the nature of *ambition* ; *avarice* ; *pleasure*. A digression on the grandeur of the *passions*. *Immortality* alone renders our present state intelligible. An objection from the Stoic's disbelief of *immortality* answered. Endless questions unresolvable, but on supposition of our *immortality*. The natural, most melancholy, and pathetic complaint of a worthy man, under the persuasion of no *futurity*. The gross absurdities and horrors of *annihilation* urged home on Lorenzo. The soul's vast *importance* ; from whence it arises. The *difficulty* of being an infidel. The *infamy*, the *cause*, and the *character* of an infidel state. What *true* free-thinking is. The *necessary* punishment of the false. Man's ruin is from *himself*. An infidel accuses himself of *guilt*, and *hypocrisy* ; and that of the worst sort. His obligation to *Christians*. What danger he incurs by *virtue*. *Vice* recommended to him. His high pretences to *virtue* and *benevolence* exploded. The conclusion, on the nature of *faith*, *reason*, and *hope*, with an apology for this attempt.

HEAVEN gives the needful, but neglected, call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes ?
Deaths stand, like *Mercuries*, in every way,

And kindly point us to our journey's end,
Pope, who couldst made immortals ! art thou dead ?
I give thee joy : nor will I take my leave ;
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death ;
Dives from the Sun, in fairer day to rise ;
The grave, his subterranean road to bliss.
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so ;
Through various parts our glorious story runs ;
Time gives the preface, *endless age* unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd !) of human fate.

This, Earth and skies already * have proclaim'd.
The world 's a prophecy of worlds to come ;
And who, what God fortels (who speaks in *things*,
Still louder than in *words*) shall dare deny ?
If *Nature*'s arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in *man*.
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he *sees*,
Can he prove infidel to what he *feels* ?
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon ! like thee,
His own indictment ; he condemns himself ;
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life ;
Or, *Nature*, there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables ; man was made a *lie*.

Why *discontent* for ever harbour'd there ?
Incurable consumption of our peace !
Resolve me, why the *cottager* and *king*,
He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,

* Night the Sixth.

Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,
In fate so distant, in complaint so near ?

Is it, that things *terrestrial* can't content ?
Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain ?
Not so ; but to their master is denied
To share their sweet *serene*. Man, ill at ease,
In this, not *his own* place, this foreign field,
Where Nature foddors him with other food
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
Sighs on for something *more*, when *most* enjoy'd.

Is Heaven then kinder to thy flocks than thee ?
Not so ; thy pasture richer, but remote ;
In part, remote ; for that remoter part
Man bleats from *instinct*, tho' perhaps, debauch'd
By *sense*, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes !
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise ;
And discontent is *immortality*.

Shall sons of ether, shall the blood of Heaven,
Set up their hopes on Earth, and stable *here*
With brutal acquiescence in the mire ?
Lorenzo ! no ! they shall be nobly pain'd ;
The glorious *foreigners*, distress'd, shall sigh
On thrones ; and thou *congratulate* the sigh :
Man's misery declares him born for bliss ;
His *anxious* heart asserts the truth I sing,
And gives the *sceptic* in his head the *lie*.
Our heads, our hearts, our *passions*, and our *powers*,
Speak the same language ; call us to the skies ;
Unripen'd *these* in this inclement clime,
Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake ;

And for this land of trifles *those* too strong
Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life :
What prize on Earth can pay us for the storm ?
Meet objects for our *passions*, Heaven ordain'd,
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault, but in defect. Blest Heaven ! avert
A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss !
O for a bliss *unbounded* ! far beneath
A soul immortal, is a mortal joy.
Nor are our *powers* to perish immature ;
But, after feeble effort *here*, beneath
A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.

Reason progressive, *instinct* is complete ;
Swift *instinct* leaps ; slow *reason* feebly climbs.
Brutes soon their zenith reach ; their little all
Flows in at once ; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.
Were *man* to live coëval with the Sun,
The patriarch-pupil would be learning still ;
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearn't.
Men perish in advance, as if the Sun
Should set ere noon, in *eastern* oceans drown'd ;
If fit, with *dim*, *illustrious* to compare,
The Sun's *meridian* with the *soul* of man.
To man, why, step-dame *Nature* ! so severe ?
Why thrown aside thy master-piece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy ?
Or, if abortively poor man must die,
Nor reach, what reach he might, why die in *dread* ?
Why curst with foresight ? Wise to misery ?

Why of his proud prerogative the prey ?
Why less pre-eminent in rank, than pain ?
His *immortality* alone can tell ;
Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
And turn the scale in favour of the just !

His *immortality* alone can solve
The darkest of *enigmas*, human *hope* ;
Of all the darkest, if at death we die.
Hope, eager hope, th' assassin of our joy,
All *present* blessings treading under foot,
Is scarce a milder tyrant than *despair*.
With no past toils content, still planning new,
Hope turns us o'er to death alone for ease.
Possession, why more tasteless than *pursuit* ?
Why is a wish far dearer than a crown ?
That wish accomplish'd, why, the grave of bliss ?
Because, in the *great future* buried deep,
Beyond our plans of empire, and renown,
Lies *all* that man with ardour should pursue ;
And he who made him, bent him to the right.

Man's heart th' Almighty to the *future* sets,
By secret and inviolable springs ;
And makes his hope his sublunary joy.
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still ;
" More, more !" the glutton cries, for something
new ;

So rages appetite, if man can't mount,
He *will* descend. He starves on the *possession*.
Hence, the world's master, from ambition's spire,
In Caprea plung'd ; and div'd beneath the brute.
In that rank sty why wallow'd empire's son
Supreme ? Because he could no higher fly ;
His *riot* was *ambition* in despair.

Old Rome consulted birds; Lorenzo! thou,
With more success, the flight of *hope* survey;
Of restless hope, for ever on the wing.
High-perch'd o'er every thought that falcon sits,
To fly at all that rises in her sight;
And, never stooping, but to mount again
Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,
And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us, (it must fail us there,
If *being* fails,) more mournful riddles rise,
And *virtue* vies with *hope* in mystery.
Why *virtue*? Where its praise, its being, fled?
Virtue is true self-interest pursued:
What true self-interest of *quite*-mortal man?
To close with all that makes him happy *here*.
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on Earth,
Then vice is virtue; 't is our *sovereign* good.
In *self-applause* is virtue's golden prize;
No self-applause attends it on *thy* scheme:
Whence self-applause? From conscience of the right.
And what is right, but means of happiness?
No means of happiness when *virtue* yields;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruin every *virtuous* joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,
Is weak; with rank knight-errandries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death?
Die for thy country! — Thou romantic fool!
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink:

Thy *country* ! what to thee ? — The *Godhead*, what ?
(I speak with awe !) though he should bid thee
bleed !

If, with thy blood, thy *final* hope is spilt ?
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow,
Be deaf ; preserve thy being ; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience : know, Lorenzo !
Whate'er th' Almighty's subsequent command,
His first command is *this* — “ Man, love thyself.
In this alone, free agents are *not* free.
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize ;
If *virtue* costs existence, 't is a crime ;
Bold violation of our law *supreme*,
Black suicide ; though nations, which consult
Their gain, at thy expense, resound applause.

Since *virtue*'s recompense is doubtful, *here*,
If man dies wholly, well may we demand,
Why is man *suffer'd* to be good in vain ?
Why to be good in vain, is man *enjoin'd* ?
Why to be good in vain, is man *betray'd* ?
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,
By sweet complacencies from virtue felt ?
Why whispers *Nature* lies on virtue's part ?
Or if blind *instinct* (which assumes the name
Of sacred conscience) plays the fool in man,
Why *reason* made accomplice in the cheat ?
Why are the *wisest* loudest in her praise ?
Can man by *reason*'s beam be led astray ?
Or, at his peril, *imitate his God* ?
Since virtue *sometimes* ruins us on Earth,
Or *both* are true ; or man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave ; or own, Lorenzo,
Thy boast supreme, a wild absurdity.
Dauntless thy spirit ; cowards are thy scorn.
Grant man *immortal*, and thy scorn is just.
The man *immortal*, rationally brave,
Dares rush on death — because he cannot die.
But if man loses all, when life is lost,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
A *daring* infidel, (and such there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure *heroical* defect of thought,)
Of all Earth's madmen, most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
And all we praise ; for *worth*, whose noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers ;
Dream we, that lustre of the *moral* world
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close ?
Why was he wise to *know*, and warm to *praise*,
And strenuous to *transcribe*, in human life,
The Mind Almighty ? Could it be, that Fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine,
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The skies alarm, lest *angels* too might die ?

If human souls, why not angelic too
Extinguish'd ? and a *solitary* God,
O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne ?
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man ;
The next, lose man for ever in the dust ?
From dust we disengage, or man *mistakes* ;

And there, where least his judgment fears a flaw.
Wisdom and *worth* how boldly he commends !
Wisdom and *worth* are sacred names ; rever'd,
Where not embrac'd ; applauded ! deified !
Why not *compassion*'d too ? If spirits die,
Both are calamities, *inflicted* both,
To make us but more wretched. *Wisdom*'s eye
Acute, for what ? To spy more miseries ;
And *worth*, so recompens'd, new-points their stings.
Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
And *worth* exalted *humbles* us the more.
Thou wilt not patronise a scheme that makes
Weakness and *vice*, the refuge of mankind.
“ Has virtue, then, no joys ? ” — Yes, joys *dear-bought*.
Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state,
Virtue and vice are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat ; and who fights for nought ?
Or for precarious, or for small reward ?
Who virtue's *self-reward* so loud resound,
Would take degrees *angelic* here below,
And *virtue*, while they compliment, betray,
By feeble motives, and unfaithful guards.
The crown, th' *unfading* crown, her soul inspires :
'T is that, and that alone, can countervail
The body's treacheries, and the *world*'s assaults :
On Earth's poor pay our famish'd virtue dies.
Truth incontestable ! in spite of all
A Bayle has preach'd, or a Voltaire believ'd.
In man the more we dive, the more we see
Heaven's signet stamping an *immortal* make.
Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base
Sustaining all ; what find we ? *Knowledge, love.*

As light and heat, essential to the Sun,
These to the soul. And *why*, if souls expire?
How little lovely *here*? How little known?
Small *knowledge* we dig up with endless toil;
And *love* unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.
Why starv'd, on Earth, our *angel* appetites;
While *brutal* are indulg'd their fulsome fill?
Were then capacities *divine* conferr'd,
As a mock-diadem, in savage sport,
Rank insult of our pompous *poverty*,
Which reaps but pain, from seeming claims so fair?
In future age lies no redress? And shuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!
The worst to *wallow*, and the best to *weep*;
The man who merits most, must most complain:
Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven,
What the worst *perpetrate*, or best *endure*?
This cannot be. To *love*, and *know*, in man
Is boundless appetite, and boundless power;
And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
Objects, powers, appetites, Heaven suits in all;
Nor, *Nature* through, e'er violates this sweet,
Eternal concord, on her tuneful string.
Is *man* the sole exception from her laws?
Eternity struck off from human hope,
(I speak with truth but veneration too,)
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heaven,
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On Nature's beauteous aspect; and deforms,
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her *lord*.
If such is man's allotment, *what* is Heaven?
Or own the soul *immortal*, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert
All *order*. Go, mock-majesty ! go, man !
And bow to thy superiors of the stall ;
Through every scene of *sense* superior far :
They graze the turf untill'd ; they drink the stream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and un-embitter'd
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs ;
Mankind's peculiar ! *reason's* precious dower !
No foreign clime *they* ransack for their robes ;
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar ;
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd ;
They find a Paradise in every field,
On boughs *forbidden* where no curses hang :
Their *ill* no more than strikes the sense ; unstretch'd
By previous dread, or murmur in the rear :
When the *worst* comes, it comes unfear'd ; one stroke
Begins, and ends, their woe : they die but *once* ;
Blest, incommunicable privilege ! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the stars,
Philosopher, or *hero*, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.
No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
But what beams on it from *eternity*.
O sole, and sweet solution ! that unties
The difficult, and softens the severe ;
The cloud on *Nature's* beauteous face dispels ;
Restores bright *order* ; casts the brute beneath ;
And re-enthrones us in supremacy
Of joy, e'en *here* : admit immortal life,
And virtue is *knight-errantry* no more ;
Each *virtue* brings in hand a golden dower,
Far richer in reversion : *Hope* exults ;

And though much bitter in our cup is thrown,
Predominates, and gives the taste of Heaven.
O wherefore is the Deity so kind !
Astonishing beyond astonishment !
Heaven our reward — for Heaven enjoy'd below.

Still unsubdued thy stubborn heart ? — For there
The traitor lurks who doubts the truth I sing.
Reason is guiltless ; *will* alone rebels.
What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find
New, unexpected witnesses against thee ?
Ambition, pleasure, and the love of gain !
Canst thou suspect, that *these*, which make the soul
The slave of Earth, should own her heir of Heaven ?
Canst thou suspect what makes us *disbelieve*
Our immortality, should prove it *sure* ?

First, then, *ambition* summon to the bar.
Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,
And *inextinguishable nature*, speak.
Each much *deposes* ; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of *fame* !
How anxious, that fond passion to conceal ;
We blush, detected in designs on praise,
Though for best deeds, and from the best of men ;
And why ? Because *immortal*. Art divine
Has made the body tutor to the soul ;
Heaven kindly gives our blood a *moral* flow ;
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
Which stoops to court a character from man ;
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
Far more than man, with *endless* praise, and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite out-speaks

The verdict of its *shame*. When souls take fire
At high presumptions of their own desert,
One age is poor applause ; the mighty shout,
The thunder by the living *few* begun,
Late time must echo ; worlds unborn, resound.
We wish our names *eternally* to live : [thought,
Wild dream ! which ne'er had haunted human
Had not our natures been *eternal* too.
Instinct points out an interest in hereafter ;
But our blind *reason* sees not *where* it lies ;
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,
And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught,
Contemn'd ; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.
Consult th' ambitious, 't is ambition's cure.
“ And is this all ? ” cried Cæsar at his height,
Disgusted. This *third* proof ambition brings
Of immortality. The first in fame,
Observe him near, your envy will abate :
Sham'd at the disproportion vast, between
The passion and the purchase, he will sigh
At *such* success, and blush at his renown.
And why ? Because far richer prize invites
His heart ; far more illustrious glory calls ;
It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can ambition a *fourth* proof supply ?
It can, and stronger than the former three ;
Yet quite o'erlook'd by some *reputed* wise.
Though disappointments in ambition *pain*,
And though success *disgusts* ; yet still, Lorenzo !
In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts ;
By Nature planted for the noblest ends.

Absurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus given,
More prais'd, than ponder'd ; specious, but unsound ;
Sooner that hero's *sword* the world had quell'd,
Than *reason*, his ambition. Man *must* soar.
An obstinate activity within,
An insuppressive spring, will toss him up,
In spite of *fortune's* load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too ;
No *Sultan* prouder than his fetter'd slave :
Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,
And cry, — " Behold the wonders of my might !"
And why ? Because *immortal* as their lord ;
And souls immortal must for ever heave
At something great ; the glitter, or the gold ;
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven.

Nor absolutely vain is *human* praise,
When human is supported by *divine*.
I'll introduce Lorenzo to himself ;
Pleasure and *pride* (bad masters !) share our hearts.
As love of *pleasure* is ordain'd to guard
And feed our bodies, and extend our race ;
The love of *praise* is planted to protect,
And propagate the glories' of the mind.

What is it, but the *love of praise*, inspires,
Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
Earth's happiness ? From *that*, the delicate,
The grand, the marvellous, of *civil* life,
Want and *convenience*, under-workers, lay
The basis, on which *love of glory* builds.
Nor is *thy* life, O *virtue* ! less in debt
To praise, thy secret stimulating friend.

Were men not *proud*, what merit should we miss !
Pride made the virtues of the pagan world.
Praise is the salt that seasons *right* to man,
And whets his appetite for *moral* good.
Thirst of applause is virtue's *second* guard ;
Reason, her first ; but reason wants an aid ;
Our *private* reason is a flatterer ;
Thirst of applause calls *public* judgment in,
To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
And give endanger'd virtue fairer play.

Here a *fifth* proof arises, stronger still :
Why this so nice construction of our hearts ?
These delicate moralities of *sense* ;
This *constitutional* reserve of aid
To succour virtue, when our *reason* fails ;
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And, oft, the mark of injuries on Earth,
When labour'd to maturity (its bill
Of disciplines, and pains, unpaid) must die ?
Why freighted-rich, to dash against a rock ?
Were man to perish when most fit to live,
O how mis-spent were all these stratagems,
By skill divine inwoven in our frame !
Where are Heaven's holiness and mercy fled ?
Laughs Heaven, at once, at *virtue*, and at *man* ?
If not, why *that* discourag'd, *this* destroy'd ?

Thus far *ambition*. What says *avarice* ?
This *her* chief maxim, which has long been *thine* :
“ The wise and wealthy are the same.” — I grant it.
To store up treasure, with incessant toil,
This is man's province, *this* his highest praise.
To this great end keen *instinct* stings him on.

To guide that instinct, *reason* ! is thy charge ;
'T is thine to tell us where *true* treasure lies :
But, reason failing to discharge her trust,
Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
A blunder follows ; and blind *industry*,
Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won,)
O'er-loading, with the cares of distant age,
The jaded spirits of the *present* hour,
Provides for an *eternity* below.

“ *Thou shalt not covet*,” is a wise command ;
But bounded to the wealth the Sun surveys :
Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,
And *avarice* is a virtue most divine.
Is *faith* a refuge for our *happiness* ?
Most sure : and is it not for *reason* too ?
Nothing *this* world unriddles, but the *next*.
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain ?
From inextinguishable life in man :
Man, if not meant, by *worth*, to reach the *skies*,
Had wanted wing to fly so far in *guilt*.
Sour grapes, I grant, *ambition*, *avarice*,
Yet still their root is *immortality* :
These its wild growths so bitter, and so base,
(Pain and reproach !) *religion* can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their poisonous lee,
And make them sparkle in the bowl of *bliss*.

See, the *third witness* laughs at bliss remote,
And falsely promises an Eden here :
Truth she shall speak for once, though prone to lie,
A common cheat, and *Pleasure* is her name.

To pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf ;
Then hear her now, now *first* thy *real* friend.

Since Nature made us not more fond than *proud*
Of happiness (whence hypocrites in joy !
Makers of mirth ! artificers of smiles !)
Why should the joy most poignant *sense* affords
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride ? —
'Those heaven-born blushes tell us man *descends*,
E'en in the zenith of his *earthly* bliss :
Should *reason* take her infidel repose,
This honest *instinct* speaks our lineage high ;
This instinct calls on darkness to conceal
Our rapturous relation to the stalls.
Our *glory* covers us with noble *shame*,
And he that 's unconfounded, is *unmann'd*.
The man that blushes is not quite a *brute*.
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo ! will I close.
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made ;
But pleasure full of glory, as of joy ;
Pleasure, which neither *blushes*, nor *expires*.

The witnesses are heard ; the cause is o'er ;
Let *conscience* file the sentence in her court,
Dearer than *deeds* that half a realm convey :
Thus seal'd by *truth*, th' authentic record runs.

“ Know, all ; know, infidels, — unapt to know !
'T is *immortality* your nature solves ;
'T is *immortality* decyphers man,
And opens all the mysteries of his make.
Without it, half his *instincts* are a riddle :
Without it, all his *virtues* are a dream.
His very *crimes* attest his dignity ;
His sateless thirst of *pleasure*, *gold*, and *fame*,

Declares him born for blessings *infinite* :
What less than infinite makes un-absurd
Passions, which *all* on Earth but more inflames ?
Fierce passions, so mis-measur'd to *this* scene,
Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,
Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
For *Earth* too large, presage a nobler flight,
And evidence our title to the *skies*."

Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind !
Whose constitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from
Hell !

Think not our passions from *corruption* sprung,
Though to corruption now they lend their wings ;
That is their *mistress*, not their *mother*. All
(And justly) *reason* deem divine : I see,
I feel a grandeur, in the *passions* too,
Which speaks their high descent, and glorious end !
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire.
In Paradise itself they burnt as strong,
Ere Adam fell, though wiser in their aim.
Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,
What though our *passions* are run mad, and stoop
With low, terrestrial appetite, to graze
On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire ?
Yet still through their disgrace, no feeble ray
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell :
But *these* (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd),
When *reason* moderates the rein aright,
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,
Where once they soar'd illustrious ; ere seduc'd

By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on Earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their phrenzy lasts; their phrenzy fails
To disappoint *one* providential end,
For which Heaven blew up ardour in our hearts :
Were *reason* silent, boundless *passion* speaks
A future scene of boundless *objects* too,
And brings glad tidings of *eternal* day.
Eternal day ! 'T is that enlightens all ;
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it *sure*.
Consider man as an *immortal* being,
Intelligible all ; and all is great ;
A crystalline transparency prevails,
And strikes full lustre through the human sphere :
Consider man as *mortal*, all is dark,
And wretched ; *reason* weeps at the survey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, " And let her weep,
Weak *modern* reason : *ancient* times were wise.
Authority, that venerable guide,
Stands on my part ; the fam'd Athenian porch
(And who for wisdom so renown'd as they ?)
Denied this immortality to man."

I grant it ; but affirm, they *prov'd* it too.
A riddle this ! — Have patience ; I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glittering through their romantic wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them, and admire?
Fable is flat to these high-season'd sires ;
They leave th' extravagance of song below.
" Flesh shall not feel ; or, feeling, shall enjoy
The dagger or the rack ; to them, alike
A bed of roses, or the burning bull."

In men exploding all beyond the grave,
Strange doctrine, this ! As *doctrine*, it was strange ;
But not as *prophecy* ; for such it prov'd,
And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd :
They feign'd a firmness *Christians* need not feign.
The *Christian* truly triumph'd in the flame :
The *Stoic* saw, in double wonder lost,
Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,
To find the bold adventures of his thought,
Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts ? those towering
thoughts, that flew
Such monstrous heights ? — From *instinct*, and from
pride.

The glorious *instinct* of a deathless soul,
Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,
Suggested truths they could not understand.
In *lust*'s dominion, and in *passion*'s storm,
Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,
As light in chaos, glimmering through the gloom :
Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,
Pleas'd *pride* proclaim'd, what *reason* disbeliev'd.
Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell,
Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be *future* sense,
When life *immortal*, in full day, should shine ;
And *Death*'s dark shadows fly the gospel sun.
They spoke, what nothing but *immortal* souls
Could speak ; and thus the truth they question'd,
prov'd.

Can then *absurdities*, as well as *crimes*,
Speak man *immortal* ? All things speak him so.
Much has been urg'd : and dost thou call for more ?

Call ; and with endless questions be distress'd,
All unresolvable, if *Earth* is all.

“ Why life, a moment ; infinite, desire ?
Our wish, eternity ? Our home, the grave ?
Heaven's *promise* dormant lies in human *hope* ;
Who *wishes* life immortal, proves it too.
Why happiness pursued, though never found ?
Man's thirst of happiness declares *it is*
(For Nature never gravitates to nought) ;
That thirst unquench'd declares *it is not here*.
My Lucia, thy Clarissa, call to thought ;
Why *cordial friendship* riveted so deep,
As hearts to pierce at first, at parting, rend,
If friend, and friendship, vanish in an hour ?
Is not this torment in the mask of joy ?
Why by *reflection* marr'd the joys of *sense* ?
Why *past*, and *future*, preying on our hearts,
And putting all our *present* joys to death ?
Why labours *reason* ? *instinct* were as well ;
Instinct far better ; what can *choose*, can *err* :
O how *infallible* the thoughtless brute !
'T were well his *Holiness* were half as sure.
Reason with *inclination*, why at war ?
Why sense of *guilt* ? why *conscience* up in arms ? ”

Conscience of guilt, is prophecy of pain,
And bosom-counsel to decline the blow.
Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,
If nothing future paid forbearance here :
Thus on — These, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,
All *promise*, some *ensure*, a second scene ;
Which, were it *doubtful*, would be dearer far
Than all things else most *certain* ; were it *false*,

What *truth* on Earth so precious as the lie?
This world it gives us, let what will ensue;
This world it gives, in that high cordial, *hope* :
The future of the present is the soul :
How *this* life groans, when sever'd from the *next* !
Poor mutilated wretch, that disbelieves !
By dark distrust his being cut in two,
In *both* parts perishes ; *life* void of joy,
Sad prelude of *eternity* in pain !

Couldst thou persuade me, the next life could fail
Our ardent wishes ; how should I pour out
My bleeding heart in anguish, *new*, as deep !
Oh ! with what thoughts, thy *hope*, and my *despair*,
Abhor'd annihilation ! blasts the soul,
And wide extends the bounds of human woe !
Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,
In *this* black channel would my ravings run.
" Grief from the *future* borrow'd peace, erewhile.
The future *vanish'd* ! and the present *pain'd* !
Strange import of unprecedented ill !
Fall, how profound ! Like Lucifer's, the fall !
Unequal fate ! His fall, without his guilt !
From where fond *hope* built her pavilion high,
The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
To night ! To *nothing*, darker still than night !
If 't was a *dream*, why wake me, my worst foe,
Lorenzo ! boastful of the name of friend !
O for delusion ! O for error still !
Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
A *thinking* being in a world like this,
Not over-rich before, *now* beggar'd quite ;
More curst than at the *fall* ? — The Sun goes out !

The thorns shoot up ! What thorns in every thought !
 Why sense of better ? It imbitters worse.
 Why sense ? why life ? If but to sigh, then sink
 To what I was ! *twice* nothing ! and much woe !
 Woe, from Heaven's bounties ! woe from what was
 wont

To flatter most, high *intellectual powers*. [scheme,
Thought, virtue, knowledge ! Blessings, by *thy*
 All poison'd into pains. First, *knowledge*, once
 My soul's ambition, *now* her greatest dread.
 To *know myself*, true wisdom ? — No, to shun
 That shocking science, parent of despair !
 Avert thy mirror ; if I see, I die.

“ *Know my Creator ?* Climb his blest abode
 By painful speculation, pierce the veil,
 Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
 And gaze in admiration — on a *foe*,
 Obtruding life, withholding happiness !
 From the full rivers that surround his throne,
 • Not letting fall one drop of joy on man ;
 Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease
 To curse his birth, nor envy *reptiles* more !
 Ye *sable* clouds ! ye darkest shades of night !
 Hide *him*, for ever hide him, from my thought,
 Once all my comfort ; source, and soul of joy !
 Now leagu'd with furies, and with *thee**, against me.

“ *Know his achievements ?* Study his renown ?
 Contemplate this amazing universe,
 Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete !
 For what ? 'Mid miracles of nobler name,

* Lorenzo.

To find one miracle of *misery* ?
To find the being, which alone can *know*
And *praise* his works, a blemish on his praise ?
Through Nature's ample range, in thought to
stroll,
And start at *man*, the single mourner there,
Breathing high hope ! chain'd down to pangs, and
death ?

“ Knowing is suffering : and shall *virtue* share
The sigh of *knowledge* ?—Virtue shares the sigh.
By straining up the steep of *excellent*,
By battles fought, and, from temptation, won,
What gains she, but the pang of seeing worth,
Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark
With every vice, and swept to *brutal* dust ?
Merit is madness ; virtue is a crime ;
A crime to *reason*, if it costs us pain
Unpaid : what pain, amidst a thousand more,
To think the most *abandon'd*, after days
Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
As *soft* a pillow, nor make *fouler* clay !

“ *Duty ! religion !* These, our duty done,
Imply reward. *Religion* is mistake.
Duty !—There 's none, but to repel the cheat.
Ye cheats ! away : ye daughters of my pride !
Who feign yourselves the favourites of the skies :
Ye towering hopes, abortive energies !
That toss and struggle, in my *lying* breast,
To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,
As I were heir of an *eternity*.
Vain, vain ambitions ! trouble me no more.
Why travel far in quest of sure defeat ?

As bounded as my being, be my wish.
All is inverted, *wisdom* is a fool.
Sense ! take the rein ; blind *passion* ! drive us on ;
And *ignorance* ! befriend us on our way ;
Ye *new*, but *truest* patrons of our peace !
Yes ; give the *pulse* full empire ; live the *brute*,
Since, as the brute, we die. The *sum* of man,
Of godlike man ! to *revel*, and to *rot*.

“ But not on equal terms with *other* brutes :
Their revels a more poignant relish yield,
And safer too ; *they* never poisons choose.
Instinct, than *reason*, makes more wholesome meals,
And sends all-marring murmur far away.
For *sensual* life *they* best philosophize ;
Theirs that *serene*, the *sages* sought in vain :
'T is *man* alone expostulates with Heaven ;
His, all the *power*, and all the *cause*, to mourn.
Shall *human* eyes *alone* dissolve in tears ?
And bleed, in anguish, none but *human* hearts ?
The wide-stretch'd realm of *intellectual* woe,
Surpassing *sensual* far, is all our own.
In *life* so fatally distinguish'd, why
Cast in one lot, confounded, lump'd, in *death* ?

“ Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt ?
Why thunder'd this peculiar *clause* against us,
All-mortal and *all-wretched* ?—Have the skies
Reasons of state, their subjects may not scan,
Nor *humbly* reason, when they *sorely* sigh ?
All-mortal and *all-wretched* !—'T is too much :
Unparallel'd in Nature : 't is too much
On being *unrequested* at thy hands,
Omnipotent ! for I see nought but *power*.

“ And why see that? Why *thought*? To toil, and
eat,

Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.

What superfluities are *reasoning* souls!

O give eternity! or thought destroy.

But without thought our curse were half unfelt;

Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart;

And, *therefore*, 't is bestow'd, I thank thee, *reason*!

For aiding *life*'s too small calamities,

And giving being to the dread of *death*.

Such are thy bounties! — Was it then too much

For *me*, to trespass on the brutal rights?

Too much for *Heaven* to make one emmet more?

Too much for *chaos* to permit my mass

A longer stay with essences unwrought,

Unfashion'd, *untormented* into *man*?

Wretched *preferment* to this round of pains!

Wretched capacity of phrenzy, *thought*!

Wretched capacity of dying, *life*!

Life, *thought*, *worth*, *wisdom*, all (O foul revolt!)

Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.

“ *Death*, then, has chang'd his nature too:

O Death!

Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heaven!

Best friend of man! since man is man no more.

Why in this thorny *wilderness* so long,

Since there 's no *promis'd land*'s ambrosial bower,

To pay me with its honey for my stings?

If needful to the selfish schemes of Heaven

To sting us sore, why *mockt* our misery?

Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?

Why this illustrious canopy display'd?

Why so magnificently lodg'd *despair* ?
At stated periods, sure returning, roll
These *glorious orbs*, that mortals may compute
Their length of labours, and of pains ; nor lose
Their misery's full measure ? — Smiles with flowers,
And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming *Earth*,
That man may languish in *luxurious* scenes,
And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys ?
Claim *Earth* and skies man's admiration, due
For *such* delights ! Blest *animals* ! too wise
To wonder ; and too happy to complain !

“ Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene :
Why not a dungeon dark, for the condemn'd ?
Why not the dragon's subterranean den,
For man to howl in ? Why not his abode
Of the same dismal colour with his fate ?
A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense
Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders,
As congruous, as, for man, this lofty dome,
Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high
desire ;

If, from her humble chamber in the dust, [flames,
While proud thought swells, and high desire in-
The poor *worm* calls us for her inmates *there* ;
And, round us, *Death*'s inexorable hand
Draws the dark curtain close ; undrawn no more.

“ Undrawn no more ! — Behind the cloud of *Death*,
Once, I beheld the Sun ; a Sun which gilt
That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold :
How the *grave* 's alter'd ! Fathomless, as *Hell* !
A *real Hell* to those who dreamt of *Heaven*.
Annihilation ! How it yawns before me !

Next moment I may drop from *thought*, from *sense*,
The privilege of *angels*, and of *worms*,
An outcast from existence ! and this spirit,
This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
This particle of energy divine,
Which travels Nature, flies from star to star,
And visits gods, and emulates their powers,
For ever is extinguisht. Horrour ! death !
Death of *that* death I *fearless* once survey'd !—
When horreur *universal* shall descend,
And Heaven's dark concave urn all human race,
On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
How just this verse ! this monumental sigh !

*“ Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,
Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,
Swept ignominious to the common mass
Of matter, never dignified with life,
Here lie proud rationals ; the sons of Heaven !
The lords of Earth ! the property of worms !
Beings of yesterday ! and not to-morrow !
Who liv'd in terroure, and in pangs expir'd !
All gone to rot in chaos ; or to make
Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,
Nor longer sully their Creator's name.”*

Lorenzo ! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.
Just is this history ? If *such* is man,
Mankind's historian, though divine, might weep.
And dares Lorenzo smile ? — I know thee proud ;
For once let *pride* befriend thee ; pride looks pale
At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,

And art thou then a shadow ? Less than shade ?
A nothing ? *Less* than nothing ? To *have* been,
And *not to be*, is lower than unborn.
Art thou *ambitious* ? Why then make the worm
Thine equal ? Runs thy taste of *pleasure* high ?
Why patronise sure death of every joy ?
Charm *riches* ? Why choose beggary in the grave,
Of every hope a bankrupt ! and for ever ?
Ambition, pleasure, avarice, persuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
They lately *prov'd* *, the soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of ? Rather, how unmade ?
Great *Nature's* master-appetite destroy'd,
Is endless life, and happiness, despis'd ?
Or both wish'd, *here*, where neither can be found ?
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heaven !
Dar'st thou persist ? And is there nought on Earth,
But a long train of transitory forms,
Rising, and breaking, millions in an hour ?
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd ?
Oh ! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo !
Destroys thy scheme the *whole* of human race ?
Kind is fell Lucifer, compar'd to thee :
O ! spare this *waste* of being half-divine ;
And vindicate th' *economy* of Heaven.

Heaven is all love ; all joy in giving joy :
It never had created, but to *bless* :
And shall it, then, strike off the list of life,
A being blest, or worthy *so* to be ?
Heaven starts at an *annihilating* God.

* In Night VI.

Is that, all *Nature* starts at, thy desire?
Art such a clod to wish thyself *all* clay?
What is that dreadful wish?—The dying groan
Of *Nature*, murder'd by the blackest guilt.
What deadly poison has thy nature drunk;
To nature undebauch'd no shock so great;
Nature's *first* wish is *endless* happiness;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till virtue dies.
And, oh! what depth of horror lies enclos'd!
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,
But, first, he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.

If so; what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? The darkest are too fair.
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal posture of the soul,
All Hell invited, and all Hell in joy
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,
Did thy foul *fancy* whelp so black a scheme
Of *hopes* abortive, *faculties* half-blown,
And *deities* begun, reduc'd to dust?

There's nought (thou say'st) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven
Through *time*'s rough billows into *night*'s abyss.
Say, in this rapid *tide* of human ruin,
Is there no *rock*, on which man's tossing thought
Can rest from terrour, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it *something* to be born?
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-sustaining *base*,
All-realising, all-connecting *power*,

Which, as it call'd forth all things, can *recall*,
And force *destruction* to refund her spoil ?
Command the grave restore her taken prey ?
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield,
And *earth* and *ocean* pay their debt of man,
True to the grand deposit trusted *there* ?
Is there no *potentate* whose out-stretch'd arm,
When ripening time calls forth th' appointed hour,
Pluck'd from foul *devastation's* famish'd maw,
Binds *present*, *past*, and *future*, to his throne ?
His throne, how glorious, thus divinely grac'd,
By germinating beings clustering round !
A garland worthy the divinity !

A throne, by Heaven's omnipotence *in smiles*,
Built (like a *pharos* towering in the waves)
Amidst immense effusions of his love !
An ocean of *communicated* bliss !

An all-prolific, all-preserving god !
This were a god indeed.—And such *is* man,
As here presum'd : he rises from his fall.
Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
Each blossom fair of Deity destroy'd ?
Nothing is dead ; nay, nothing sleeps ; each soul,
That ever animated human clay,
Now wakes ; is on the wing : and where, O where,
Will the swarm settle ?—When the *trumpet's* call,
Assounding brass, collects us, round Heaven's throne
Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day,
(Paternal-splendour !) and adhere for ever.
Had not the soul this *outlet* to the skies,
In this vast vessel of the universe,
How should we gasp, as in an empty void !
How in the pangs of famish'd *hope* expire !

How bright *my* prospect shines; how gloomy
thine !

A trembling world ! and a devouring God !
Earth, but the shambles of Omnipotence !
Heaven's face all stain'd with causeless massacres
Of countless millions, born to feel the pang
Of being *lost*. Lorenzo ! can it be ?
This bids us shudder at the thoughts of *life*.
Who would be born to such a phantom world,
Where nought substantial but our misery ?
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
So soon to perish, and revive no more ?
The greater *such* a joy, the *more* it pains.
A world, so far from *great*, (and yet how *great*
It shines to thee !) there 's nothing *real* in it ;
Being, a shadow ; *consciousness*, a dream ;
A dream, how dreadful ! Universal blank
Before it, and behind ! Poor man, a spark
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,
Glittering a moment, nor that moment sure,
'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding *night*,
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb !

Lorenzo ! dost thou *feel* these arguments ?
Or is there nought but *vengeance* can be felt ?
How hast thou dar'd the Deity dethrone ?
How dar'd *indict* him of a world like this ?
If *such* the world, creation was a crime ;
For what is crime but cause of misery ?
Retract, blasphemer ! and unriddle *this*,
Of endless arguments *above*, *below*,
Without us, and *within*, the short result !
" *If man's immortal, there 's a God in Heaven.*"

But wherefore such redundancy? such waste
Of argument? One sets *my* soul at rest!
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh! — at *heart*.
So just the skies, Philander's life so pain'd,
His heart so pure; *that*, or *succeeding* scenes
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.
“*What an old tale is this!*” Lorenzo cries. —
I grant this argument is old; but truth
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never hadst despis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy soul; and *fable*
As fleeting as thy joys: be wise, nor make
Heaven's highest blessing, vengeance; O be wise!
Nor make a curse of *immortality*.

Say, know'st thou what *it* is, or what *thou* art?
Know'st thou the *importance* of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; *one* soul outweighs them
all;
And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of *unintelligent* creation *poor*.

For this, believe not *me*; no *man* believe;
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less
Than those of the Supreme; nor his, a few;
Consult them *all*; consulted, all proclaim
Thy soul's importance: tremble at thyself;
For whom *Omnipotence* has wak'd so long:
Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages; from the birth
Of Nature to this *unbelieving* hour.

In this small province of his vast domain,

(All *Nature* bow, while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for *this* sole end,
To rescue souls from death? *The soul's high price*
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.

The soul's high price is the *Creation's key*,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of every deed divine :
That is the *chain of ages*, which maintains
Their obvious correspondence, and unites
Most distant periods in one bléss design :
That is the *mighty hinge*, on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard
The *natural, civil, or religious*, world ;
The former two but servants to the third :
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their *mass* new-cast, forgot their *deeds* renown'd :
And angels ask, "*Where once they shone so fair?*"

To lift us from this abject, to sublime ;
This flux, to permanent ; this dark, to day ;
This foul, to pure ; this turbid, to serene ;
This mean, to mighty ! — for *this* glorious end
Th' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke !
The world was made ; was ruin'd ; was restor'd ;
Laws from the skies were publish'd ; were repeal'd ;
On *Earth* kings, kingdoms, rose ; kings, kingdoms,
fell ;

Fam'd sages light'd up the *pagan* world ;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance
Through distant age ; saints travell'd ; martyrs bled ;
By wonders sacred Nature stood controll'd ;
The living were translated ; dead were rais'd ;
Angels, and *more* than angels, came from Heaven ;

And, oh ! for *this*, descended lower still :
Guilt was Hell's gloom ; astonish'd at his guest,
For one short moment Lucifer ador'd :
Lorenzo ! and wilt thou do less ? — For *this*,
That *hallow'd page*, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,
Of all these truths — thrice-venerable code !
Deists ! perform your quarantine ; and then
Fall prostrate, ere you touch it, lest you die.

Nor less intensely bent *infernal* powers
To mar, than those of *light*, *this* end to gain.
O what a scene is here ! — Lorenzo ! wake !
Rise to the thought ; exert, expand thy soul,
To take the vast idea : it denies
All *else* the name of great. Two warring worlds !
Not Europe against Afric ; warring worlds !
Of *more* than mortal ! mounted on the wing !
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
High-hovering o'er this little brand of strife !
This sublunary ball — But strife, for what ?
In their own cause conflicting ? No ; in *thine*,
In *man's*. His *single* interest blows the flame ;
His the sole stake ; his fate the trumpet sounds,
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns !
Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms !
Force, force opposing, till the waves run high,
And tempest Nature's universal sphere.
Such opposites eternal, steadfast, stern,
Such foes implacable, are *good*, and *ill* ; [them.
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between
Think not this fiction, "*There was war in Heaven.*"
From Heaven's high crystal mountain, where it hung,
Th' Almighty's out-stretch'd arm took down his bow,

And shot his indignation at the *deep* :
Re-thunder'd *Hell*, and darted all her fires.
And seems the stake of little moment still ?
And slumbers *man*, who singly caus'd the storm ?
He sleeps. — And art thou shock'd at *mysteries* ?
The greatest, thou. How dreadful to reflect,
What ardour, care, and counsel *mortals* cause
In breasts divine ! how little in their own !

Where'er I turn, how new *proofs* pour upon me !
How happily this wondrous view supports
My former argument ! How strongly *strikes*
Immortal life's full demonstration, *here* !
Why this exertion ? Why this strange regard
From Heaven's Omnipotent indulg'd to man ? —
Because, in man, the glorious dreadful power,
Extremely to be pain'd, or blest, for *ever*.
Duration gives importance ; swells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be ? A trifle of no weight ;
Or stand, or fall ; no matter which ; he 's gone.
Because immortal, therefore is indulg'd
This strange regard of deities to dust.
Hence, Heaven looks down on Earth with all her eyes :
Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight :
Hence, every soul has partisans above,
And every thought a critic in the skies :
Hence, clay, vile clay ! has angels for its guard,
And every guard a passion for his charge :
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine
Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid :
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,

And Providence came forth to meet mankind :
In various modes of emphasis and awe,
He spoke his will, and trembling *Nature* heard ;
He spoke it loud, in thunder and in storm.
Witness, thou Sinai ! whose cloud-cover'd height
And shaken basis, own'd the present God ;
Witness, ye *billows* ! whose returning tide.
Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
Swept Egypt, and her menaces, to Hell :
Witness, ye *flames* ! th' Assyrian tyrant blew
To sevenfold rage, as impotent, as strong .
And thou, *Earth* ! witness, whose expanding jaws
Clos'd o'er *presumption's* sacrilegious sons * :
Has not each element, in turn, subscribed
The *soul's* high price, and sworn it to the wise ?
Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
To strike *this truth* through adamantine man ?
If not all adamant, Lorenzo ! hear ;
All is delusion ; *Nature* is wrapt up
In tenfold night, from *reason's* keenest eye ;
There 's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end, .
In all beneath the Sun, in all above
(As far as man can penetrate), or Heaven
Is an immense, inestimable prize ;
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all. —
And shall each *toy* be still a match for Heaven,
And full equivalent for groans below ?
Who would not give a trifle to *prevent*
What he would give a thousand worlds to *cure* ?
Lorenzo ! thou hast seen (if thine to see)

* Korah, &c.

All *Nature*, and her God (by *Nature's course*,
And *Nature's curse controll'd*) declare for me:
The skies above proclaim, "*immortal man!*"
And, "*man immortal!*" all below resounds.
The world's a system of theology,
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;
If *honest*, learn'd; and *sages* o'er a plough.
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee
This hard alternative; or, to renounce
Thy *reason*, or thy *sense*; or, to *believe*?
What then is *unbelief*? 'T is an exploit;
A strenuous enterprise: to gain it, man
Must burst through every bar of common sense;
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;
And what rewards the sturdy combatant?
His prize, *repentance*; *infamy*, his crown.

But wherefore, *infamy*? — For want of *faith*,
Down the steep precipice of *wrong* he slides;
There's nothing to support him in the *right*.
Faith in the future wanting is, at least
In *embryo*, every weakness, every guilt;
And strong temptation ripens it to *birth*.
If *this* life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country sold, his father slain?
'T is virtue to pursue our good supreme;
And his supreme, his *only* good is *here*.
Ambition, *avarice*, by the wise disdain'd,
Is perfect *wisdom*, while mankind are *fools*,
And think a turf, or tomb-stone, covers all:
These find employment; and provide for *sense*
A richer pasture, and a larger range,
And *sense* by right divine ascends the throne,

When *virtue's* prize and prospect are no more ;
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
Would Heaven quite *beggar* virtue, if belov'd ?

“ Has *virtue* charms ? ” — I grant her heavenly
fair ;

But if unportion'd, all will *interest* wed ;
Though *that* our admiration, *this* our choice.
The virtues grow on *immortality* ;
That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.
A deity believ'd, will nought avail ;
Rewards and *punishments* make God ador'd ;
And *hopes* and *fears* give *conscience* all her power.

As in the dying parent dies the child,
Virtue, with *immortality*, expires.
Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
Whate'er his boast, has told me, *he 's a knave*.
His *duty* 't is, to love himself *alone* ;
Nor care though mankind perish, if he smiles.
Who thinks ere long the man shall *wholly* die,
Is dead already ; nought but *brute* survives.

And are there such ? — Such candidates there re
For *more* than death ; for utter loss of being,
Being, the basis of the Deity !
Ask you the *cause* ? — The cause they will not tell :
Nor *need* they : O the sorceries of *sense* !
They work this transformation on the soul,
Dismount her, like the serpent at the fall,
Dismount her from her native wing, (which soar'd
Ere-while ethereal heights,) and throw her down,
To lick the dust, and *crawl* in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you ? O ye fall'n !
Fall'n from the wings of *reason*, and of *hope* !

Erect in stature, prone in appetite !
Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain !
Lovers of argument, averse to sense !
Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains !
Lords of the wide creation, and the shame !
More *senseless* than th' *irrationals* you scorn ! [pity,
More *base* than those you rule ! Than those you
Far more *undone* ! O ye most infamous
Of beings, from superior dignity !
Deepest in woe from means of boundless bliss !
Ye curst by blessings infinite ! because
Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost !
Ye motley mass of *contradiction* strong !
And are you, too, convinc'd, your souls fly off
In exhalation soft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence *against* you ?
In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of *sense*,
Your souls have quite worn out the make of Heaven,
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own :
But though you can *deform*, you can't *destroy* ;
To *curse*, not *uncreate*, is all your power.

Lorenzo ! this black brotherhood renounce ;
Renounce St. Evremont, and read St. Paul.
Ere rapt by miracle, by *reason* wing'd,
His mounting mind made long abode in Heaven.
This is freethinking, unconfin'd to *parts*,
To send the soul, on curious travel bent,
Through all the provinces of human thought ;
To dart her flight through the whole sphere of man
Of this vast universe to make the tour ;
In each recess of *space*, and *time*, at home ;
Familiar with their wonders ; diving deep ;

And, like a prince of boundless interests *there*,
Still most ambitious of the most remote ;
To look on *truth* unbroken, and entire ;
Truth in the *system*, the full orb ; where truths
By truths enlighten'd, and sustain'd, afford
An arch-like, strong foundation, to support
Th' incumbent weight of absolute, complete
Conviction ; here, the more we press, we stand
More firm : who most *examine*, most *believe*.
Parts, like half-sentences, confound ; the *whole*
Conveys the sense, and God is understood ;
Who not in *fragments* writes to human race :
Read his *whole* volume, sceptic ! then reply.

This, this, is thinking free, a thought that grasps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eyes, survey this midnight scene ;
What are Earth's kingdoms, to yon boundless orbs,
Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range ?
And what yon boundless orbs, to godlike *man* ?
Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,
And ask more space in Heaven, can roll at large
In man's capacious thought, and still leave room
For ampler orbs, for *new* creations, there.
Can *such* a soul contract itself, to gripe
A point of no dimension, of no weight ?
It can ; it does : the *world* is such a point :
And, of *that* point, how *small* a part enslaves !

How small a part — of *nothing*, shall I say ?
Why not ? — *Friends*, our *chief* treasure ! how they
drop !

Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone !
The *grave*, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd

A triple mouth ; and, in an awful voice,
Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.
How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy !
What says this *transportation* of my friends ?
It bids me love the place where *now* they dwell,
And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.
Eternity's vast *ocean* lies before thee ;
There ; there, Lorenzo ! thy *Clarissa* sails.
Give thy mind sea-room ; keep it wide of *Earth*,
That rock of souls *immortal* ; cut thy cord ;
Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call every wind ;
Eye thy *Great Pole-star* ; make the land of life.

Two kinds of life has *double-natur'd* man,
And two of death ; the *last* far more severe.
Life *animal* is nurtur'd by the Sun ;
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.
Life *rational* subsists on higher food,
Triumphant in *his* beams, who made the day.
When we leave *that* Sun, and are left by *this*,
(The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt,)
'T is *utter* darkness ; strictly *double* death.
We sink by no *judicial* stroke of Heaven,
But Nature's *course* ; as sure as plummets fall.
Since God, or man, must alter, ere they meet,
(Since light and darkness blend not in one sphere,)
'T is manifest, Lorenzo ! *who* must change.

If, then, that *double death* should prove thy lot,
Blame not the bowels of the Deity ;
Man shall be blest, as far as man *permits*.
Not man alone, all *rational*s, Heaven arms
With an illustrious, but tremendous, power

To counteract its own most gracious ends ;
And this, of strict necessity, not choice ;
That power denied, *men, angels*, were no more
But passive engines, void of praise or blame.
A nature *rational* implies the power
Of being blest, or wretched, as we please ;
Else idle *reason* would have nought to do ;
And he that would be barr'd capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss.
Heaven *wills* our happiness, *allows* our doom ;
Invites us ardently, but not *compels* ;
Heaven but *persuades*, almighty man *decrees* ;
Man is the maker of immortal fates.
Man falls by man, if finally he falls ;
And fall he *must*, who learns from *death* alone
The dreadful secret — That he lives for ever.

Why *this* to thee ? — Thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
Of second life ? But wherefore doubtful still ?
Eternal life is nature's ardent wish :
What ardently we wish, we *soon* believe :
Thy *tardy* faith declares that wish destroy'd :
What has destroy'd it ? — Shall I tell thee what ?
When *fear'd the future*, 't is no longer wish'd ;
And, when unwish'd, we *strive* to disbelieve.
“ *Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.* ”
Nor that the *sole* detection ! Blush, Lorenzo !
Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.
The *future fear'd* ? — An *infidel*, and fear ?
Fear what ? A *dream* ? A *fable* ? — How thy dread,
Unwilling evidence, and therefore *strong*,
Affords my cause an undesign'd support !
How *disbelief* affirms what it denies !

" *It, unaware, asserts immortal life.*"

Surprising ! *infidelity* turns out

A *creed*, and a *confession of our sins* :

Apostates, *thus*, are orthodox divines.

Lorenzo ! with Lorenzo clash no more ;

Nor longer a *transparent vizar* wear.

Think'st thou, religion *only* has her mask ?

Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,

Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, *fail*.

When visited by thought (*thought will intrude*),

Like him they serve, they *tremble* and *believe*.

Is their hypocrisy so foul as this ;

So fatal to the welfare of the world ?

What *detestation*, what *contempt*, their due !

And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape

That Christian candour they *strive* hard to scorn :

If not for that asylum, they might find

A Hell on *Earth* ; nor 'scape a worse *below*.

With insolence, and impotence of thought,

Instead of racking fancy, to *refute*,

Reform thy manners, and the truth *enjoy*. —

But shall I dare confess the dire result ?

Can thy proud *reason* brook so black a brand ?

From *purser* manners, to *sublimar* faith,

Is Nature's unavoidable ascent ;

An *honest* deist, where the Gospel shines,

Matur'd to nobler, in the *Christian* ends.

When that blest change arrives, e'en cast aside

This song superfluous ; *life immortal* strikes

Conviction, in a flood of light *divine*.

A *Christian* dwells, like Uriel *, in the Sun ;

• Milton.

Meridian evidence puts *doubt* to flight ;
And ardent *hope* anticipates the skies.
Of *that* bright Sun, Lorenzo ! scale the sphere ;
'T is easy ! it invites thee ; it descends
From Heaven to woo, and waft thee whence it
came :

Read and revere the *sacred page* ; a page
Where triumphs *immortality* ; a page
Which not the whole *creation* could produce ;
Which not the *conflagration* shall destroy :
'T is printed in the mind of gods for ever,
In Nature's ruins not one letter lost.

In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,
Dost smile ? — Poor wretch ! thy guardian angel
weeps.

Angels, and *men*, assent to what I sing ;
Wits smile, and thank me for my *midnight dream*.
How vicious hearts fume phrenzy to the brain !
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame ;
Pert infidelity is wit's cockade,
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
By *loss of being*, dreadfully secure.
Lorenzo ! if *thy* doctrine wins the day,
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field ;
If *this* is all, if *Earth* a *final* scene,
Take heed ; stand fast ; be sure to be a *knave*,
A knave in grain ! ne'er deviate to the *right* :
Shouldst thou be *good* — how infinite thy loss !
Guilt only makes *annihilation* gain.
Bleatscheme ! which life deprives of *comfort*, death
Of *hope* ; and which vice *only* recommends.
If so, *where*, infidels ! your bait, thrown out

To catch weak converts? *where* your lofty boast
Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?
Annihilation! I confess, in *these*.

What can *reclaim* you? Dare I hope profound
Philosophers the converts of a song?
Yet know, *its title* * flatters you, not me;
Yours be the praise to make *my title* good;
Mine, to bless Heaven, and triumph in *your praise*.
But since so pestilential your disease,
Though sovereign is the medicine I prescribe,
As yet, I'll neither triumph, nor despair:
But hope, ere long, my *midnight dream* will wake
Your hearts, and teach your *wisdom* — to be wise:
For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,
E'er wish, (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?
What ne'er *can* die, oh! grant to *live*; and crown
The wish, and aim, and labour of the skies;
Increase, and *enter* on the joys of Heaven:
Thus shall my title pass a *sacred seal*,
Receive an *imprimatur* from above,
While angels shout — *An Infidel Reclaim'd!*

To close, Lorenzo! spite of all my pains,
Still seems it strange, that thou shouldst live *for*
ever?

Is it *less* strange, that thou shouldst live *at all*?
This is a miracle; and *that* no more.
Who gave beginning, can exclude an end.
Deny thou *art*: then, doubt if thou *shalt be*.
A miracle with miracles enclos'd,
Is man: and starts his faith at what is *strange*?

* The Infidel Reclaimed.

What less than wonders, from the *wonderful* ;
What less than miracles, from God, can flow ?
Admit a God — that mystery supreme !
That cause uncaus'd ! all other wonders cease ;
Nothing is marvellous for *him* to do :
Deny him — all is mystery besides :
Millions of mysteries ! *each* darker far,
Than *that* thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.
If *weak* thy faith, why choose the harder side ?
We nothing *know*, but what is marvellous ;
Yet what is marvellous, we can't *believe*.
So *weak* our *reason*, and so *great* our God,
What most surprises in the *sacred page*,
Or full as strange, or stranger, *must* be true.
Faith is not *reason's* labour, but repose.

To *faith*, and *virtue*, why so backward, man ?
From hence : — The *present* strongly strikes us all ;
The *future*, faintly ; can we, then, be *men* ?
If men, Lorenzo ! the reverse is right.
Reason is man's peculiar : *sense*, the brute's.
The *present* is the scanty realm of *sense* ;
The *future*, *reason's* empire unconfin'd :
On *that* expending all her godlike power,
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, *there* ;
There builds her *blessings* ! there expects her *praise* ;
And nothing asks of *fortune*, or of *men*.
And what is *reason* ? Be she, thus, defin'd ;
Reason is *upright stature* in the *soul*.
Oh ! be a *man* ; and strive to be a *god*.
“ For what ? (thou say'st) To damp the joys of life ? ”
No ; to give *heart* and *substance* to thy joys.
That tyrant, *hope* ; mark how she domineers ;

She bids us quit realities, for dreams ;
Safety and peace, for hazard and alarm ;
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,
She bids *ambition* quit its taken prize,
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits,
Though bearing crowns, to spring at *distant* game ;
And plunge in toils and dangers — for repose.
If *hope* precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
Of little moment, and as little stay,
Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys ;
What then, *that* hope, which nothing can defeat,
Our leave unask'd? Rich hope of boundless bliss !
Bliss, past *man's* power to paint it ; *time's* to close !

This hope is Earth's most estimable prize :
This is man's portion, while no more than man :
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us *here* ;
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
Joy has her *tears* ; and *transport* has her *death* ;
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,
Man's heart, at once, *inspirits*, and *serenes* ;
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys ;
'T is all our present state can *safely* bear,
Health to the frame ! and vigour to the mind .
A joy attemper'd ! a *chastis'd* delight !
Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet !
'T is man's full cup ; his Paradise below !

A blest hereafter, *then*, or hop'd, or gain'd,
Is all ; our *whole* of happiness : full proof,
I chose no trivial or inglorious *theme*.
And know, ye foes to song ! (well-meaning men,
Though quite forgotten half your Bible's praise * !)

* The poetical parts of it.

Important truths, in spite of verse, may please :
Grave minds you praise ; nor can you praise too
much :

If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the *grave* listen ; — and be *graver* still.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY ;

OR,

THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED,

The Love of this Life ; the Ambition and Pleasure,
with the Wit and Wisdom of the World.

AND has all Nature, then, espous'd my part ?
Have I brib'd Heaven and Earth to plead against
thee ?

And is thy soul *immortal* ? — What remains ?
All, all, Lorenzo ! — Make immortal, blest.
Unblest immortals ! — What can shock us more ?
And yet Lorenzo still affects *the world* ;
There, stows his treasure ; thence, his title draws,
Man of the world (for such wouldst thou be call'd).
And art thou proud of that inglorious style ?
Proud of reproach ? for a reproach it *was*,
In ancient days ; and CHRISTIAN — in an age
When men were men, and not ashamed of Heaven —
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,

Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments fatal, and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song :
To thee, the *world how fair* ! How strongly strikes
Ambition ! and *gay pleasure* stronger still !
Thy triple bane ! the triple bolt that lays
Thy virtue dead ! Be *these* my triple theme ;
Nor shall thy *wit*, or *wisdom*, be forgot.

Common the theme ; not so the song ; if *she*
My song invokes, Urania deigns to smile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If she dissolves, the *man of earth*, at once,
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes ;
Scenes, where these sparks of night, these *stars*,
shall shine

Unnumber'd suns (for all things, as they *are*,
The blest behold) ; and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight ;
A blaze — the least illustrious object *there*.

Lorenzo ! since *eternal* is at hand,
To swallow *time's* ambitions ; as the vast
Leviathan, the bubbles vain, that ride
High on the foaming billow ; what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our *highest* ? O Lorenzo !
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
What towering hopes, what sallies from the Sun,
What grand surveys of destiny divine,
And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in bosoms, where a spirit burns,
Bound for eternity ! In bosoms read

By *him*, who foibles in archangels sees !
On human hearts *he* bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in Heaven's register enrolls
The rise and progress of each option there ;
Sacred to doomsday ! *That* the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

And what an option, O Lorenzo ! thine ?
This world ! and this, unrivall'd by the skies !
A world, where lust of *pleasure, grandeur, gold,*
Three *demons* that divide its realms between them,
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball ;
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above
That glorious *promise* angels were esteem'd
Too *mean* to bring ; a promise, their *Ador'd*
Descended to communicate, and press,
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom woos,
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose ;
A pillow, which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not composes ; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest ;
What *unfeign'd* travel, and what dreams of joy !

How frail, men, things ! how momentary, both !
Fantastic chase of shadows hunting shades !
The *gay*, the *busy*, equal, though unlike ;
Equal in wisdom, differently wise ! [wastes,
Through flowery meadows, and through dreary
One bustling, and one dancing, into death.

There's not a day, but, to the man of thought,
Betrays some secret, that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.
The scenes of *business* tell us — "What are men ;"
The scenes of *pleasure* — "What is all beside ;"
There, others we despise ; and *here*, ourselves.
Amid *disgust* eternal, dwells delight ?
'T is *approbation* strikes the string of joy.

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,
On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave ?
The *proud* run up and down in quest of eyes ;
The *sensual*, in pursuit of something worse ;
The *grave*, of gold ; the *politic*, of power ;
And all, of other butterflies, as vain !
As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
How is man's heart by *vanity* drawn in ;
On the swift circle of returning toys, [gulf'd ;
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then, in-
Where gay delusion darkens to despair !

" *This is a beaten track.* " — Is this a track
Should not be beaten ? never beat enough,
Till enough learn'd the truths it would inspire.
Shall truth be silent, because folly *frowns* ?
Turn the world's history ; what find we there,
But *fortune's* sports, or *nature's* cruel claims,
Or *woman's* artifice, or *man's* revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man ?
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds, but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings : how it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the listening world !
Man is the tale of narrative old *time* ;

Sad tale ; which high as Paradise begins ;
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The *days*, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On *fortune's* wheel, where accident unthought,
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With, now-and-then, a wretched farce between,
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us ;
Not one, but puts some cheat on all mankind :
While in their *father's* bosom, not yet *ours*,
They flatter our fond hopes ; and promise much
Of amiable ; but hold *him* not o'erwise,
Who dares to trust them ; and laugh round the year,
At still-confiding, still-confounded, man,
Confiding, though confounded ; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever-looking for the never-seen.
Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies ;
Nor owns itself a cheat, till it expires.
Its little joy goes out by one and one,
And leaves poor man, at length, in perfect night ;
Night darker than what, *now*, involves the Pole.

O thou, who dost permit these ills to fall [mourn !
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should
O thou, whose hands this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should
know !

What is this sublunary world ? A vapour ;
A vapour all it holds ; itself, a vapour ;
From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam

Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt, and disappear.
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom ;
As mortal, though less transient, than her sons ;
Yet they dote on her, as the world and they
Were both eternal, solid ; thou, a dream.

They dote ! on what ? *Immortal views* apart,
A region of outsides ! a land of shadows !
A fruitful field of flowery promises !
A wilderness of joy ! perplex'd with doubts,
And sharp with thorns ! a troubled *ocean*, spread
With bold adventurers, their *all* on board !
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns ;
Frown soon it *must*. ' Of various rates they sail,
Of ensigns various ; all alike in this,
All restless, anxious ; tost with hopes, and fears,
In calmest skies ; obnoxious *all* to storm ;
And stormy the most general blast of life :
All bound for happiness ; yet few provide
The chart of *knowledge*, pointing where it lies ;
Or *virtue's* helm, to shape the course design'd :
All, more or less, capricious fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now resorb'd,
And further from their wishes than before :
All, more or less, against each other dash,
To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion driven,
And suffering more from folly, than from fate.

Ocean ! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man !
Death's capital, where most he domineers,
With all his chosen *terrors* frowning round,

(Though lately feasted high at Albion's cost *)
Wide-opening, and loud-roaring still for more !
Too faithful mirror ! how dost thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life !
The strong resemblance tempts me further still :
And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck
By *moral truth*, in such a mirror seen,
Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,
When *young*, with sanguine cheer and streamers gay,
We cut our cable, launch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and star our friend ;
All, in some darling enterprise embark'd :
But where is he can fathom its extent ?
Amid a multitude of artless hands,
Ruin's sure perquisite ! her lawful prize !
Some steer aright ; but the black blast blows hard,
And puffs them wide of hope : with hearts of proof,
Full against wind and tide, *some* win their way ;
And when strong effort has deserv'd the port,
And tugg'd it into view, 't is won ! 't is lost !
Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate :
They strike ; and while they triumph, they expire.
In stress of weather, *most* ; *some* sink outright ;
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close ;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a short memorial leave behind,
Like a flag floating, when the bark 's ingulf'd ;
It floats a moment, and is seen no more :
One Cæsar lives ; a thousand are forgot.

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
(Darlings of Providence ! fond Fate's elect !)
With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,
With all their wishes freighted ; yet e'en these,
Freighted with all their wishes, soon complain ;
Free from misfortune, not from nature free,
They still are men ; and when is man secure ?
As fatal *time*, as *storm* ! the rush of years
Beats down their strength ; their numberless escapes
In ruin end : and, now, their proud success
But plants *new* terrors on the victor's brow :
What pain to quit the world, just made their own !
Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high !
Too low they build, who build beneath the stars.

Woe then apart, (if woe apart can be
From mortal man,) and fortune at our nod,
The gay ! rich ! great, triumphant ! and august !
What are they ? — The *most* happy (strange to say !)
Convince *me* most of human misery ;
What are they ? Smiling wretches of *to-morrow* !
More wretched, *then*, than e'er their slave *can* be ;
Their treacherous blessings, at the day of need,
Like other faithless friends, unmask, and sting :
Then, what provoking indigence in wealth !
What aggravated impotence in power !
High titles, *then*, what insult of their pain !
If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,
Immortal hope ! defies not the rude storm,
Takes comfort from their foaming billows' rage,
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

Is this a *sketch* of what thy soul admires ?
“ But here,” thou say'st, “ the miseries of life

Are huddled in a group. A more distinct
Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news."
Look on life's stages : they speak plainer still ;
The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.
Look on thy lovely boy ; in him behold
The best that can befall the best on Earth ;
The boy has virtue by his *mother's* side :
Yes, on Florello look : a *father's* heart
Is tender, though the *man's* is made of stone ;
The truth, through such a medium seen, may make
Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

Florello, lately cast on this rude coast
A helpless infant ; now, a heedless child ;
To poor *Clarissa's* throes, thy care succeeds ;
Care full of love, and yet severe as hate !
O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns !
Needful austerities his will restrain ;
As thorns fence-in the tender plant from harm.
As yet, his *reason* cannot go alone ;
But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
His little heart is often terrified ;
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale ;
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye ;
His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.
Ah ! what avails his innocence ? The task
Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers ;
He learns to sigh, ere he is known to sin ;
Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !
How cruel this ! more cruel to forbear.
Our *nature* such, with *necessary* pains,
We purchase prospects of *precarious* peace :
Though not a *father*, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not,
T will sink our poor account to poorer still);
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world!
The world is taken, after ten years' toil,
Like ancient Troy; and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world 's a tutor more severe;
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
Or books (fair virtue's advocates!) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life?

Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight,)
And, in their hospitable arms, enclose:
Men, who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend:
Men, that act up to *reason's* golden rule,
All weakness of *affection* quite subdued:
Men, that would blush at being *thought* sincere,
And feign, for glory, the *few* faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well;
As if, to them, *vice* shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?

Such, for Florello's sake, 't will now appear:
See, the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace;
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose, in politeness sheath'd;
His friends eternal — during interest;
His foes implacable — when worth their while;

At war with every welfare, but their own ;
As wise as Lucifer, and half as good ;
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain —
Naked, through these (so common fate ordains),
Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
Stung out of all, most amiable in life, [feign'd ;
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles un-
Affection, as his species, wide diffus'd ;
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown ;
Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
Will cost him many a sigh ; till time, and pains,
From the slow mistress of this school, *experience*,
And her assistant, pausing, pale, *distrust*,
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
Through serpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy ! if the clue shall come so cheap ;
For, while we learn to fence with public guilt,
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
If less than heavenly virtue is our guard.
Thus, a strange kind of curst necessity
Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,
By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
Below call'd wisdom ; sinks him into safety,
And brands him into credit with the *world* ;
Where specious titles dignify disgrace,
And Nature's injuries are arts of life ;
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes ;
And heavenly talents make infernal hearts ;
That unsurmountable extreme of guilt !

Poor Machiavel ! who labour'd hard his plan,

Forgot, that genius need not go to school ;
Forgot, that man, without a tutor wise,
His plan had practis'd long before 't was writ.
The world 's all *title-page* ; there 's no *contents* ;
The world 's all *face* ; the man who shows his *heart*,
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.
A man I knew, who liv'd upon a smile,
And well it fed him ; he look'd plump and fair ;
While rankest venom foam'd through every vein.
Lorenzo ! what I tell thee, take not ill !
Living, he fawn'd on every *fool* alive ;
And, dying, curs'd the *friend* on whom he liv'd.
To such proficients thou art half a saint.
In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
With all the *necromantics* of their art,
Playing the game of *faces* on each other,
Making court sweet-meats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust ;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd ;
And sometimes both (let Earth rejoice) undone !
Their parts we doubt not ; but be that their shame ;
Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool ;
And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve ?
For who can thank the man he cannot *see* ?

Why so much cover ? It defeats itself. [hearts
Ye, that know all things ! know ye not, men's
Are therefore known, *because* they are conceal'd ?
For why conceal'd ? — The cause they need not tell.
I give him joy, that 's awkward at a lie ;

Whose feeble nature *truth* keeps still in awe ;
His incapacity is his renown.
'T is great, 't is manly, to disdain *disguise* ;
It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength.
Thou say'st, " 'T is *needful* : " is it therefore *right* ?
Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace,
To strain at an excuse : and wouldst thou then
Escape that cruel *need* ? Thou may'st, with ease ;
Think no post *needful* that demands a knave.
When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
So Pulteney thought : think better if you can.

But this, how rare ! the public path of life
Is dirty : — yet, allow that dirt is due,
It makes the noble mind more noble still :
The world 's no neuter ; it will wound, or save ;
Or virtue quench, or indignation fire. [man :"
You say, " The world, well known, will make a
The world, well-known, will give our hearts to
Heaven,

Or make us *demons*, long before we die.

To show how fair the world, *thy* mistress, shines,
Take *either* part, sure ills attend the choice ;
Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.
Not *virtue*'s self is deify'd on Earth ;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes ;
Foes, that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
True friends to virtue, *last*, and *least*, complain ;
But if *they* sigh, can *others* hope to smile ?
If *wisdom* has her miseries to mourn,
How can poor *folly* lead a happy life ?
And if *both* suffer, what has Earth to boast,

Where he *most* happy, who the *least* laments?
Where *much, much* patience, the most envied state,
And *some* forgiveness, needs the best of friends?
For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow *here*.

The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies;
" Thus far thy song is right; and all must own
Virtue has her *peculiar set of pains*. —
And joys *peculiar* who to vice denies?
If vice it is, with nature to comply:
If *pride*, and *sense*, are so predominant,
To *check*, not *overcome* them, makes a saint.
Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
Pleasure, and *glory*, the chief good of man?"

Can *pride*, and *sensuality*, rejoice?
From purity of thought, all *pleasure* springs;
And, from an humble spirit, all our *peace*.
Ambition, pleasure! let us talk of these:
Of these, the Porch, and Academy, talk'd;
Of these, each following age had much to say:
Yet, unexhausted, still the needful theme.
Who talks of *these*, to mankind all at once
He talks; for were the saints from either free?
Are these thy refuge? — No: these rush upon thee;
Thy vitals seize, and, *vulture-like*, devour:
I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
Prometheus! from this barren ball of Earth;
If *reason* can unchain thee, thou art free.

And, first, thy *Caucasus*, ambition, calls;
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
Of courted woes! and courted through mistake!

'T is not ambition charms thee ; 't is a cheat
Will make thee start, as H — at his *Moor*.
Dost grasp at greatness ? First, know what it is :
Think'st thou thy greatness in *distinction* lies ?
Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
By *fortune* stuck, to mark us from the throng,
Is glory lodg'd : 't is lodg'd in the reverse ;
In that which joins, in that which equals, all,
The monarch and his slave ; — “ a deathless soul,
Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
A Father-God, and brothers in the skies ; ”
Elder, indeed, in time ; but less remote
In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man ;
Why greater what can fall, than what can rise ?

 If still delirious, now, Lorenzo ! go ;
And with thy full-blown brothers of the *world*,
Throw scorn around thee ; cast it on thy slaves ;
Thy slaves and equals : how scorn cast on them
Rebounds on thee ! If man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god ? If *fortune* makes him so,
Beware the consequence : a maxim that,
Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
Where, in the drapery, the *man* is lost ;
Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot.
Thy greatest glory, when dispos'd to boast,
Boast *that* aloud, in which thy servants share.

 We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy :
Judge we, in their caparisons, of *men* ?
It nought avails thee, *where*, but *what*, thou art ;
All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the *man*.
When, through death's streights, *Earth's* subtle
 serpents creep,

Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft
Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.
Of fortune's *fucus* strip them, yet alive :
Strip them of body, too ; nay, closer still,
Away with all, but *moral*, in their minds ;
And let what then remains impose their name,
Pronounce them weak, or worthy ; great, or mean.
How mean that snuff of glory *fortune* lights,
And *death* puts out ! Dost thou demand a test,
A test, at once, infallible, and short,
Of *real* greatness ? That man greatly lives,
Whate'er his fate, or fame, who greatly dies ;
High-flush'd with hope, where heroes shall despair.
If *this* a true criterion, many courts,
Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

Th' Almighty, from his throne, on Earth surveys
Nought greater, than an honest, humble heart ;
An humble heart, *his* residence ! pronounc'd
His second seat ; and rival to the skies.
The private path, the secret acts of men,
If noble, far the noblest of our lives !
How far above Lorenzo's glory sits
Th' illustrious master of a name *unknown* ;
Whose worth unrivall'd, and unwitness'd, loves
Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men ;
And *peace*, beyond the world's conception, smiles !
As thou (now dark), before we part, shalt see.

But thy great soul this *skulking* glory scorns.
Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen ;

And when he shrugs at public business, lies.
Denied the public eye, the public voice,
As if he liv'd on others' breath, he dies.
Fain would he make the world his pedestal ;
Mankind the gazers, the sole figure, he.
Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can ?
Knows he, that faithless *fame* her whisper has,
As well as trumpet ? That his vanity
Is so much tickled from not hearing *all* ?
Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praise,
Or, from an itch more sordid, when he shines,
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him, and despise,
With modest laughter lining loud applause,
Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame ?
His *fame*, which (like the mighty Cæsar), crown'd
With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
By *seeming* friends, that honour, and destroy.
We rise in glory, as we sink in pride :
Where boasting ends, there dignity begins :
And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake,
The blind Lorenzo's proud — of being proud ;
And dreams himself ascending in his fall.

An eminence, though fancy'd, turns the brain :
All vice wants *hellebore* ; but of all vice,
Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl ;
Because, unlike all other vice, it flies,
In *fact*, the point in *fancy* most pursued.
Who court applause, oblige the world in *this* ;
They gratify man's passion to *refuse*.
Superior honour, when *assum'd*, is *lost* ;

E'en good men turn *banditti*, and rejoice,
Like Kouh-Kan, in plunder of the proud.

Though somewhat disconcerted, steady still
To the *world's* cause, with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries — " Be, then, *ambition* cast ;
Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,
Gay pleasure ! proud *ambition* is her slave ;
For her, he soars at *great*, and hazards *ill* ;
For her, he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes ;
And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her smile :
Who can resist her charms ?" — Or, *should* ? Lo-
renzo !

What mortal shall resist, where angels yield ?
Pleasure 's the mistress of ethereal powers ;
For her contend the rival gods above ;
Pleasure 's the mistress of the world below ;
And well it was for man, that *pleasure* charms ;
How would all stagnate, but for *pleasure's* ray !
How would the frozen stream of action cease !
What is the pulse of this so busy world ?
The love of *pleasure* : that, through every vein,
Throws motion, warmth ; and shuts out death from
life.

Though various are the tempers of mankind,
Pleasure's gay family hold all in chains :
Some most affect the black ; and some, the fair ;
Some honest *pleasure* court ; and some, obscene.
Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng
Of passions, that can err in human hearts ;
Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.
Think you there 's but one whoredom ? Whoredom,
all,

But when our *reason* licenses delight :
Dost doubt, Lorenzo ? Thou shalt doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet hugs
An ugly common harlot, in the dark ;
A rank adulterer with others' *gold* !
And that hag, *vengeance*, in a corner, charms.
Hatred her brothel has, as well as *love*,
Where horrid *epicures* debauch in blood.
Whate'er the motive, *pleasure* is the mark :
For her, the black assassin draws his sword ;
For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
To which no *single* sacrifice may fall ;
For her, the saint abstains ; the miser starves ;
The Stoic proud, for *pleasure*, pleasure scorn'd ;
For her, *affliction's* daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ;
For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy ;
And with an aim *voluptuous*, rush on death.
Thus universal her despotic power !

And as her empire wide, her praise is just.
Patron of pleasure ! doater on delight !
I am thy rival ! pleasure I profess ;
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.
Pleasure is nought but virtue's gayer name :
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low ;
Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower ;
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the *wise* offence !
If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the *name*,
How knits *austerity* her cloudy brow,
And blames, as bold, and hazardous, the *praise*
Of *pleasure*, to mankind, *unprais'd*, too dear !

Ye modern Stoics! hear my soft reply;
Their senses men *will* trust: we can't impose;
Or, if we could, is imposition right?
Own *honey sweet*; but, owning, add this *sting*;
"When mixt with poison, it is deadly too."
Truth never was indebted to a lie.
Is nought but *virtue* to be prais'd, as good?
Why then is health preferr'd before disease?
What nature loves *is* good without *our* leave;
And where no future drawback cries, "*Beware,*"
Pleasure, though not from virtue, *should* prevail.
'T is balm to life, and gratitude to Heaven;
How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
The *love of pleasure* is man's eldest-born,
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb:
Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,
Was meant to *minister*, and not to mar,
Imperial *pleasure*, queen of human hearts.

Lorenzo! thou, her majesty's renown'd,
Though uncoift counsel, learned in *the world*!
Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
May'st look on me. Yet, my Demosthenes!
Canst thou plead *pleasure's* cause as well as I?
Know'st thou her *nature, purpose, parentage*?
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
And know thyself; and know thyself to be
(Strange truth) the most abstemious man alive.
Tell not Calista; she will laugh thee dead;
Or send thee to her hermitage with L ——.
Absurd presumption! Thou who never knew'st
A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a *happy life* by chance;

Or yawn'd it into being, with a wish ;
Or, with the shout of grovelling appetite,
E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
An *art* it is, and must be learnt ; and learnt
With unremitting effort, or be lost ;
And leaves us perfect blockheads, in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates ;
Wealth may seek us ; but *wisdom* must be sought ;
Sought before all ; but (how unlike all else
We seek on Earth !) 't is never sought in vain.

First, *pleasure's* birth, rise, strength, and grandeur see.

Brought forth by *wisdom*, nurs'd by *discipline*,
By *patience* taught, by *perseverance* crown'd,
She rears her head majestic ; round her throne,
Erected in the bosom of the just,
Each virtue, listed, forms her manly guard,
For what are *virtues* ? (formidable name !)
What, but the fountain, or defence, of joy ? [mands,
Why, then, commanded ? Need mankind corn-
At once to *merit*, and to *make*, their bliss ?
Great Legislator ! scarce so great, as kind !
If men are rational, and love delight,
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice ;
In the transgression lies the penalty ;
And they the most indulge, who most obey.

Of *pleasure*, next, the final cause explore ;
Its mighty *purpose*, its important *end*.
Not to turn *human* brutal, but to build
Divine on human, *pleasure* came from Heaven.
In aid to *reason* was the goddess sent ;
To call up all its strength by such a charm.

Pleasure, first, succours *virtue* ; in return,
Virtue gives *pleasure* an eternal reign.
What, but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
Supports life *natural, civil, and divine* ?
'T is from the pleasure of repast, we live ;
'T is from the pleasure of applause, we please ;
'T is from the pleasure of belief, we pray ;
(All prayer would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize ;)
It serves ourselves, our species, and our God ;
And to serve more, is past the sphere of man.
Glide, then, for ever, pleasure's sacred stream !
Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And fosters every growth of happy life ;
Makes a new Eden where it flows ; — but such
As *must* be lost, Lorenzo ! by thy fall.

“ *What mean I by thy fall ?* ” — Thou 'lt shortly
see,

While pleasure's *nature* is at large display'd ;
Already sung her *origin*, and *ends*.
Those glorious ends, by kind, or by degree,
When *pleasure* violates, 't is then a vice,
And vengeance too ; it hastens into pain.
From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy ;
From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death ;
Heaven's justice, *this* proclaims, and *that* her love.
What greater evil can I wish my foe,
Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask
Unbroach'd by *just authority*, ungaug'd
By *temperance*, by *reason* unrefin'd ?
A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
Heaven, others, and ourselves ! uninjur'd *these*,
Drink deep ; the deeper, then, the more divine :

Angels are angels, from indulgence *there*;

'T is unrepenting pleasure makes a god.

Dost think thyself a god from other joys?

A victim rather ! shortly sure to bleed.

The wrong *must* mourn : can Heaven's appointments fail ?

Can man outwit Omnipotence ? Strike out

A self-wrought happiness unmeant by *him*

Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?

Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence

Its dissonance, or harmony, shall rise.

Heaven bade the soul this mortal frame inspire :

Bade virtue's ray divine inspire the soul

With unprecarioes flows of vital joy ;

And, without breathing, man as well might hope

For life, as without piety, for peace.

" Is *virtue*, then, and *piety* the same ?"

No ; piety is more ; 't is virtue's source ;

Mother of every worth, as that of joy.

Men of the world this doctrine ill digest :

They smile at piety ; yet boast aloud

Good-will to men ; nor know they strive to part

What *nature* joins ; and thus confute themselves.

With *piety* begins all good on Earth ;

'T is the first-born of rationality.

Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies ;

Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good ;

A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power.

Some we can't love, but for the Almighty's sake ;

A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man ;

Some sinister intent taints all he does ;

And, in his kindest actions, he 's unkind.

On piety, humanity is built ;
And on humanity, much happiness ;
And yet still more on piety itself.
A soul in commerce with her God is Heaven ;
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life ;
The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.
A Deity believ'd, is joy begun ;
A Deity ador'd, is joy advanc'd ;
A Deity belov'd, is joy matur'd.
Each branch of *piety* delight inspires ;
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides ;
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still ;
Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worships the *Great God*, that instant joins
The first in Heaven, and sets his foot on Hell.

Lorenzo ! when wast thou at church *before* ?
Thou think'st the service long : but is it just ?
Though just, unwelcome ; thou hadst rather tread
Unhallow'd ground ; the Muse, to win thine ear,
Must take an air less solemn. She complies.
Good conscience ! at the sound *the world* retires ;
Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles ;
Yet has she her *seraglio* full of charms ;
And such as age shall heighten, not impair.
Art thou dejected ? Is thy mind o'ercast ?
Amid her fair-ones, thou the fairest choose, [*truth* ;
To chase thy gloom. — “ Go, fix some weighty
Chain down some *passion* ; do some *generous good* ;

Teach *ignorance* to see, or *grief* to smile ;
Correct thy *friend* ; befriend thy greatest *foe* ;
Or with warm heart, and confidence divine, [thee."'
Spring up, and lay strong hold on *him* who made
Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow ;
Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
Loud mirth, mad laughter ? Wretched comforters !
Physicians ! more than half of thy disease.
Laughter, though never censur'd yet as sin,
(Pardon a thought that only *seems* severe,)
Is half-immortal : is it much indulg'd ?
By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
It shows a *scorner*, or it makes a *fool* ;
And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.
'T is *pride*, or *emptiness*, applies the straw,
That tickles little minds to mirth effuse !
Of grief approaching, the portentous sign !
The house of laughter makes a house of woe.
A man *triumphant* is a monstrous sight ;
A man *dejected* is a sight as mean.
What cause for *triumph*, where such ills abound ?
What for *dejection*, where presides a power,
Who call'd us into being to be blest ?
So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy ;
So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
Most true, a wise man never will be sad ;
But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
A shallow stream of happiness betray :
Too happy to be sportive, he 's serene.
Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense),
This counsel strange should I presume to give —

"Retire, and read thy *Bible*, to be gay."
There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace ;
Ah ! do not prize them less, because inspir'd,
As thou, and thine, are apt and proud to do.
If *not* inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood,
Time's treasure ; and the wonder of the wise !
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy *soul* alone at stake,
Alas ! — Should men mistake thee for a *fool* ; —
What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
Though tender of thy fame, could interpose ?
Believe me, sense, *here*, acts a double part,
And the true *critic* is a *Christian* too.

But *these*, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.
True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first ;
They, first, themselves offend, who greatly please ;
And travel only gives us sound repose.
Heaven *sells* all pleasure ; effort is the price ;
The joys of conquest are the joys of man ;
And *glory* the victorious *laurel* spreads
O'er *pleasure's* pure, perpetual, placid stream.

There is a time, when toil must be preferr'd,
Or joy, by mistim'd fondness, is undone.
A man of *pleasure* is a man of *pains*.
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be blest.
False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought ;
From thoughts full bent, and energy, the *true* ;
And that demands a mind in equal poise,
Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.
Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
But happiness that shortly must expire.
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand ?
And, in a tempest, can reflection live ?

Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour ?
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd ?
Or ope the door to honest poverty ?
Or talk with threatening death, and not turn pale ?
In such a world, and such a nature, *these*
Are needful fundamentals of delight ;
These fundamentals give delight *indeed* ;
Delight, pure, delicate, and durable ;
Delight, unshaken, masculine, divine ;
A constant, and a sound, but *serious* joy.
Is joy the daughter of severity ?
It is ; — yet far my doctrine from severe.
“ Rejoice for ever : ” it becomes a man ;
Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.
“ Rejoice for ever ! ” *Nature* cries, “ Rejoice ! ”
And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,
Mixt up of delicacies for every sense ;
To the great Founder of the bounteous feast,
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;
And he that will not *pledge her*, is a churl.
Ill firmly to support, *good* fully taste,
Is the whole science of felicity :
Yet *sparing pledge* : *her* bowl is not the best
Mankind can boast. — “ A rational repast ;
Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
A military discipline of thought,
To foil *temptation* in the doubtful field ;
And ever-waking ardour for *the right*.”
'T is *these* first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.
Nought that is *right*, think little ; well aware,
What reason bids, God bids ; by *his* command
How aggrandiz'd, the smallest thing we do !

Thus, *nothing* is insipid to the wise :
To thee, insipid all, but what is *mad* ;
Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.

“ *Mad !* ” (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)
“ Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
I follow *nature*. ” — Follow *nature* still,
But look it be thine *own* : is *conscience*, then,
No part of nature ? Is she not *supreme* ?
Thou regicide ! O raise her from the dead !
Then follow nature, and resemble God.

When, spite of *conscience*, pleasure is pursued,
Man's nature is *unnaturally* pleas'd ;
And what 's unnatural is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee !
The *fact* thou know'st ; but not, perhaps, the *cause*.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid ;
Heaven mixt her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred interests with the strings of life.
Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,
His better self ; and is it greater pain,
Our *soul* should murmur, or our *dust* repine ?
And one, in their eternal war, *must* bleed.

If one *must* suffer, which should least be spar'd ?
The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense :
Ask, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt.
The joys of *sense* to *mental* joys are mean :
Sense on the present only feeds ; the soul
On past, and future, forages for joy.
'T is hers, by retrospect, through *time* to range ;
And forward *time's* great sequel to survey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the *mind*,

Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall :
Guard then, thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

Lorenzo ! wilt thou never be a man ?

The man is dead, who for the body lives,
Lur'd, by the beating of his pulse, to list
With every lust that wars against his peace :
And sets him quite at variance with himself.
Thyself, first, know ; then love : a *self* there is
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.
A *self* there is, as fond of every vice,
While every virtue wounds it to the heart :
Humility degrades it, *justice* robs,
Blest *bounty* beggars it, fair *truth* betrays,
And god-like *magnanimity* destroys.
This self, when rival to the former, scorn ;
When not in competition, kindly treat ;
Defend it, feed it : — but when virtue bids,
Toss it or to the fowls, or to the flames.
And why ? 'T is love of *pleasure* bids thee bleed ;
Comply, or own self-love *extinct*, or *blind*.

For what is *vice* ? Self-love in a mistake :
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And *virtue*, what ? 'T is self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread power,
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.
Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate ;
More mortal than the malice of our foes ;
A self-hate, *now*, scarce felt ; *then* felt full-sore,
When being curst ; extinction, loud implor'd ;
And every thing preferr'd to what we *are*.

Yet *this* self-love Lorenzo makes his choice :

And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betray'd,
By disaffection to the present hour !
Imagination wanders far afield :
The future pleases : why ? The present pains —
“ But that 's a *secret*.” Yes, which all men know ;
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause ;
What is it ? — 'T is the cradle of the soul,
From *instinct* sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, *reason*, will not cure.
A poor expedient ! yet thy best ; and while
It mitigates thy pain, it *owns* it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies !
The weak have remedies ; the wise have joys.
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise ?
Consistent wisdom ever wills the same ;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
Sick of herself, is *folly's* character ;
As *wisdom's* is, a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is *thy* good supreme ;
Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.
Man's greatest strength is shown in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health,
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False pleasure from abroad her joys imports ;
Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the *true* ;
The *true* is fixt, and solid as a rock ;
Slippery the *false*, and tossing, as the wave.
This, a wild wanderer on Earth, like Cain ;

That, like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight ;
She dreads an interruption from without.
Smit with her own condition ; and the more
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy, till he thinks, on Earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself ;
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all ;
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.
Such angels, all, entitled to repose
On *him* who governs fate : though tempest frowns,
Though nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heaven !
To lean on *him*, on whom archangels lean !
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting every beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight ;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to, Heaven :
Hence, are *they* studious of sequester'd scenes ;
While noise, and dissipation, comfort *thee*.

Were all men happy, revelings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo ! never man was truly blest,
But it compos'd, and gave him such a cast,
As *folly* might mistake for want of joy.
A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud ;
A modest aspect, and a smile-at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander's spring !
A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent, as pure ! no turbid stream
Of rapturous exultation, swelling high ;
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour awhile,

Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man, who transient joy prefers ?
What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream ?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight ;
Convulsions of a weak, distemper'd joy.
Joy 's a fixt state ; a tenure, not a start.
Bliss there is none, but *unprecarius* bliss :
That is the gem : sell all, and purchase that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies,
Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd, if gain'd ?
At good fortuitous, draw back, and pause ;
Suspect it ; what thou canst ensure, enjoy ;
And nought but what thou giv'st thyself, is sure.
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,
And makes it as immortal as herself ;
To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.

Worth, conscious worth ! should *absolutely* reign ;
And other joys ask leave for their approach ;
Nor, unexamin'd, ever leave obtain.
Thou art all anarchy ; a mob of joys
Wage war, and perish in intestine broils ;
Not the least promise of internal peace !
No bosom-comfort ! or unborrow'd bliss !
Thy thoughts are vagabonds ; all outward-bound,
'Mid sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for
pleasure ;
If gain'd, dear-bought ; and better miss'd than gain'd.
Much pain must expiate what much pain procur'd.
Fancy, and *sense*, from an infected shore,
Thy cargo bring ; and pestilence the prize.
Then, such thy thirst, (*insatiable* thirst !
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more !)
Fancy still cruises, when poor *sense* is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian shop,
Where feeble happiness, like Vulcan, lame,
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,
And hot as Hell (which kindled the black fires),
With wanton art, those fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are,
On angel-wing, descending from above,
Which these, with art divine, would counter-work,
And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In *this* is seen imagination's *guilt* ;
But who can count her *follies* ? She betrays thee,
To think in grandeur there is something great.
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd ;
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
Hence, what disaster ! — Though the price was paid,
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
Whose foot (ye gods !) though cloven, must be kiss'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore ;
(Such is the fate of honest Protestants !)
And poor *magnificence* is starv'd to death.
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire !
Be pacified ; if *outward* things are great,
'T is magnanimity great things to scorn ;
Pompous expenses, and parades august,
And courts, that insalubrious soil to peace.
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye ;
True happiness resides in things unseen.
No smiles of *fortune* ever blest the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob *innocence* of joys ;
That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor :
So tell his *holiness*, and be reveng'd.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good ;
Or only contest, what deserves the name.
Give *pleasure's* name to nought, but what has pass'd
Th' authentic seal of *reason*, (which, like Yorke,
Demurs on what it passes,) and defies
The tooth of Time ; when past, a pleasure still ;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms our present, joy.
Some joys the future overcast ; and some
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity ; some give
Abhorr'd annihilation dreadful charms.
Are rival joys contending for thy choice ?
Consult thy *whole existence*, and be safe ;
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
Short is the lesson, though my lecture long,
Be good — and let Heaven answer for the rest.

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
The *good man* has his clouds that intervene ;
Clouds, that *obscure* his sublunary day,
But never *conquer* : e'en the *best* must own,
Patience, and *resignation*, are the pillars
Of human peace on Earth. The pillars, these :
But those of Seth not more remote from thee,
Till *this* heroic lesson thou hast learnt ;
To frown at *pleasure*, and to smile in *pain*.
Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bliss,
Heaven in reversion, like the Sun, as yet
Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in this world ;
It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

"This," says Lorenzo, "is a fair harangue:
But can harangues blow back strong Nature's
stream ;

Or stem the tide Heaven pushes through our veins,
Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
And lays his labour level with the *world* ?"

Themselves men make their comment on mankind ;
And think nought *is*, but what they find at home :
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.
Nothing romantic has the Muse prescrib'd.
Above *, Lorenzo saw the man of Earth,
The *mortal man* ; and wretched was the sight.
To balance *that*, to comfort, and exalt,
Now see the *man immortal* : him, I mean,
Who lives as such ; whose heart, full bent on Heaven,
Leans all *that way*, his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more ; though bright, without a soil :
Observe his awful portrait, and admire ;
Nor stop at wonder ; imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed !
A man on Earth devoted to the skies ;
Like ships in seas, while *in, above* the world.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of *sense*, and *passion's* storm ;
All the black cares, and tumults, of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.

• In a former Night.

Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred, and the slave,
A mingled mob ! a wandering herd ! he sees,
Bewilder'd in the vale ; in all unlike !
His full reverse in all ! what higher praise ?
What stronger demonstration of the right ?

The present all *their* care ; the future, *his*.
When public welfare calls, or private want,
They give to fame ; his bounty *he* conceals.
Their virtues varnish nature ; *his* exalt.
Mankind's esteem *they* court ; and *he*, his own.
Theirs, the wild chase of *false* felicities ;
His, the compos'd possession of the *true*.
Alike throughout is *his* consistent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread ;
While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for *them*
A madman's robe ; each puff of *fortune* blows
The tatters by, and shows their nakedness.

He sees with other eyes than *theirs* : where *they*,
Behold a *sun*, *he* spies a *Deity* :
What makes *them* only smile, makes *him* adore.
Where *they* see *mountains*, *he* but *atoms* sees ;
An *empire*, in *his* balance, weighs a *grain*.
They things terrestrial worship, as divine :
His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust,
That dims his sight and shortens his survey,
Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aside to find his dignity ;
No dignity *they* find in aught besides.
They triumph in externals (which conceal
Man's real glory), proud of an eclipse.

Himself too much *he* prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks so great in man, as *man*.
Too dear *he* holds his interest, to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade ;
Their interest, like a lion, lives on prey.
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong ;
Wrong *he* sustains with temper, looks on Heaven,
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe ; [peace.
Nought, but what wounds his virtue, wounds his
A cover'd heart *their* character defends ;
A cover'd heart *denies* him half his praise.
With nakedness his innocence agrees ;
While *their* broad foliage testifies their fall.
Their no-joys end, where *his* full feast begins :
His joys create, *theirs* murder, future bliss.
To triumph in existence, *his* alone ;
And *his* alone, triumphantly to think
His true existence is not yet begun.
His glorious course was, yesterday, complete ;
Death, then, was welcome ; yet life still is sweet.

But nothing charms Lorenzo, like the firm
Undaunted breast—And whose is that high praise ?
They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,
And show no fortitude, but in the field ;
If there they show it, 't is for glory shown ;
Nor will that cordial always man *their* hearts.
A cordial *his* sustains that cannot fail ;
By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts.
All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls ;
And when he falls, writes VICI on his shield.
From magnanimity, all *fear* above ;

From nobler recompense, above *applause* ;
Which owes to man's *short* out-look all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt,
Lorenzo cries, — “ Where shines this miracle ?
From what root rises this *immortal man* ? ”
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground ;
The root dissect, nor wonder at the *flower*.

He follows nature (not like thee *) and shows us
An uninverted system of a man.

His *appetite* wears *reason's* golden chain,
And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
His *passion*, like an eagle well reclaim'd,
Is taught to fly at nought, but infinite.
Patient his *hope*, unanxious is his *care*,
His *caution* fearless, and his *grief* (if grief
The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
And why ? — Because, affection, more than meet,
His wisdom leaves not disengag'd from Heaven.
Those secondary goods that smile on Earth,
He, loving in *proportion*, loves in *peace*.
They most the world enjoy, who least admire.
His *understanding* 'scapes the common cloud
Of fumes, arising from a boiling breast.
His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
The moderate movements of his soul admit
Distinct ideas, and matur'd debate,
An eye impartial, and an even scale ;
Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
Thus, in a double sense, the *good* are wise ;

* See p. 375.

On its own dunghill, wiser than the world.
What, then, the world? It *must* be doubly weak;
Strange truth! as soon would they believe their
Creed.

Yet thus it is; nor otherwise *can* be;
So far from aught romantic, what I sing.
Bliss has no being, virtue has no strength,
But from the prospect of immortal life.
Who think Earth all, or (what weighs just the same)
Who care no further, *must* prize what it yields;
Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
Who thinks Earth nothing, *can't* its charms admire;
He can't a foe, though most malignant, hate,
Because that hate would prove his greater foe.
'T is hard for *them* (yet who so loudly boast
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend;
For may not he invade their *good supreme*,
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?
All shines to *them*, that for a season shines.
Each act, each thought, *he* questions, "What its
weight,
Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?"
And what it *there* appears, he deems it *now*.
Hence, pure are the recesses of his soul.
The god-like man has nothing to conceal.
His virtue, constitutionally deep,
Has *habit's* firmness, and *affection's* flame;
Angels, allied, descend to feed the fire;
And *death*, which others slays, makes him a god.
And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world!
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heaven!
Stand by thy *scorn*, and be reduc'd to nought:

For what art thou?—Thou boaster! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most;
And like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
By promise *now*, and by possession *soon*,
(Too *soon*, too *much*, it cannot be) his own.

From this thy just *annihilation* rise,
Lorenzo! rise to *something*, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens, and expects;
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
Canst thou be silent? No; for *wit* is thine;
And wit talks *most*, when *least* she has to say,
And *reason* interrupts not her career.
She 'll say — *That mists above the mountains rise*;
And, with a thousand pleasantries, amuse;
She 'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,
And fly conviction, in the dust she rais'd.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
'T is precious, as the vehicle of *sense*;
But, as its substitute, a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Passion can give it; sometimes ~~mine~~ *inspires*
The lucky flash; and ~~madness~~ rarely fails.
Whatever cause ~~the~~ spirit strongly stirs,
Confers ~~the~~ bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown, 't were well, was this the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique the more,
See *dulness*, blundering on vivacities,

Shakes her *sage* head at the calamity,
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.
But *wisdom*, awful wisdom! which inspects,
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last;
How rare! in senates, synods, sought in vain;
Or, if *there* found, 't is sacred to the *few*;
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
Frequent, as fatal, *wit*: in civil life,
Wit makes an enterpriser; *sense*, a man.
Wit hates authority; commotion loves,
And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
In *states*, 't is dangerous; in *religion*, death:
Shall *wit* turn Christian, when the dull *believe*?
Sense is our *helmet*, *wit* is but the plume;
The *plume* exposes, 't is our *helmet* saves.
Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound;
When cut by *wit*, it casts a brighter beam;
Yet, *wit* apart, it is a diamond still.
Wit, widow'd of *good sense*, is worse than nought;
It hoists more sail to run against a rock.
Thus, a *half*-Chesterfield is quite a fool;
Whom *dull* fools scorn, and bless their want of *wit*.
How ruinous the rock I warn thee, shun,
Where Syrens sit, to sing thee to thy fate!
A *joy*, in which our *reason* bears no part,
Is but a *sorrow* tickling, ere it stings.
Let not the cooings of the world *allure* thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy! of this bad world who little know: —
And yet, we much must know her, to be *safe*.
To *know* the world, not *love* her, is thy point;

She gives but little, nor that little, long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse ;
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy ;
Our *thoughtless agitation's* idle child,
That mantles high, that sparkles and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before.
An *animal* ovation ! such as holds
No commerce with our *reason*, but subsists
On juices, through the well-ton'd tubes, well
strain'd ;

A nice machine ! scarce ever tun'd aright ;
And when it jars — thy Syrens sing no more,
Thy dance is done ; the *demi-god* is thrown
(Short apotheosis !) beneath the *man*,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair.

Art thou yet *dull enough* despair to dread,
And startle at destruction ? If thou art,
Accept a buckler, take it to the field ;
(A field of battle is this mortal life !)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart ;
A single sentence proof against the *world* ;
“ *Soul, body, fortune !* every good pertain
To one of these ; but prize not all alike ;
The goods of fortune to the body's health,
Body to soul, and soul submit to God.”
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness ? Do this ;
The invert'd *pyramid* can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful ? It outshines the Sun ;
Nay the Sun shines not, but to show us this,
The single lesson of mankind on Earth.
And yet — yet what ? — No news ! mankind is mad ;
Such mighty numbers list against the right,

(And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve?)
They talk themselves to something like belief,
That all Earth's joys are theirs : as Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port, on every sail his own.

They grin ; but wherefore ? and how long the
laugh ?

Half ignorance, their mirth ; and half, a lie ;
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they
smile.

Hard either task ! The most abandon'd own,
That *others*, if abandon'd, are undone :
Then for themselves, the moment *reason* wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repose,)

O how laborious is their gaiety !
They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,
Scarce muster patience to support the farce,
And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I say ? Some cannot sit it out ;
Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And show us *what* their joy, by their despair.

The clotted hair ! gor'd breast ! blaspheming eye !
Its impious fury still alive in death !
Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But Heaven denies
A cover to such guilt ; and so should man.
Look round, Lorenzo ! see the reeking blade,
Th' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball ;
The strangling cord, and suffocating stream ;
The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays
From raging riot (slower suicides !)
And *pride* in these, more execrable still !
How horrid all to thought !—But horrors, these,
That vouch the truth ; and aid my feeble song.

From *vice, sense, fancy*, no man can be blest :

Bliss is too great, to lodge within an hour :

When an immortal being aims at bliss,

Duration is essential to the name.

O for a joy from *reason* ! joy from that,

Which makes man *man* ; and, exercis'd aright,

Will make him *more* : a *bounteous* joy ! that gives,

And promises ; that weaves, with art divine,

The richest prospect into present peace :

A joy *ambitious* ! Joy in common held

With thrones ethereal, and their greater far ;

A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death !

A joy, which *death* shall double, *judgment* crown !

Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,

Through blest eternity's long day : yet still,

Not more remote from *sorrow*, than from *him*,

Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours

So much of Deity on guilty dust.

There, O my Lucia ! may I meet thee there,

Where not thy presence can improve my bliss !

Affects not this the *sages of the world* ?

Can nought *affect* them, but what *fools* them too ?

Eternity, depending on an hour, [praise.

Makes *serious thought* man's wisdom, joy, and

Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs

May shun the light) at your designs on Heaven :

Sole point ! where *over-bashful* is your blame.

Are you not *wise* ? — You know you are : yet hear

One truth, amid your numerous schemes, mislaid,

Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen ;

“ Our schemes to plan by *this* world, or the *next*,

Is the sole difference between wise and fool.¹
All *worthy men* will weigh you in *this* scale ;
What wonder then, if *they* pronounce you *light* ?
Is *their* esteem alone not worth your care ?
Accept my simple scheme, of *common sense* ; [own.
Thus, save your fame, and make *two* worlds your
The world *replies* not ; — but the world *persists* ;
And puts the *cause* off to the longest day,
Planning evasions for the day of doom.
So far, at that *re-hearing*, from redress,
They then turn *witnesses* against themselves :
Hear that, Lorenzo ! nor be wise to-morrow.
Haste, haste ! A man, by nature, is in haste ;
For who shall answer for another hour ?
'T is highly prudent, to make *one* sure friend ;
And that thou canst not do, this side the skies.

Ye sons of Earth ! (nor *willing* to be more !)
Since *verse* you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truths, which, at church, you *might* have heard in
prose)

Has ventur'd into light ; well-pleas'd the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain :
And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But *praise* she need not fear : I see my fate ;
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf,
Since many an ample *volume*, mighty *tome*,
Must die ; and die unwept ; O thou minute,
Devoted *page* ! go forth among thy foes ;
Go nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death : mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live : nor shalt thou rest

When thou art dead ; in Stygian shades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne,
And bold blasphemer of his friend — the world ;
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And *volunteers* around his banner swarm ;
Prudent, as Prussia, in her zeal for Gaul !

“ Are all, then, fools ? ” Lorenzo cries — Yes, all,
But such as hold *this* doctrine (new to thee) ;

“ The mother of true wisdom is the *will* ; ”

The noblest *intellect*, a fool without it.

World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,

In arts and sciences, in wars and peace ;

But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,

And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.

This is the *most* indulgence can afford ; —

“ *Thy wisdom all can do, but — make thee wise.* ”

Nor think this censure is severe on thee :

Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
Printers-Street, London.

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